

GRAPEVINE

VISITACION VALLEY

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SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

JUNE 2008

Construction Nearly Complete at Coffman Pool



With construction of a new facility nearly completed, Coffman Pool is scheduled to reopen this summer. The pool has been closed for a major renovation since 2006.

The new 10,000 square-foot building is part of a conceptual plan developed several years ago with input from users and community members. It surrounds the original 100 by 40-foot pool built in 1957. The existing pool shell and mechanical room were updated during construction.

Features of the modern building include a new entry lobby, reception area, public restrooms, locker rooms, a family changing room, staff and support spaces, and an outdoor patio.



With a striking different entrance than its predecessor, the new building housing Coffman Pool will be sporting all of the amenities of a modern facility.

Concerned Neighbors Learn of Muni Changes at Meeting

by Aaron D. Kudatsky

A Transit Effectiveness Project (TEP) meeting was held on May 5 at Visitacion Valley Elementary School to discuss proposals of transforming the Muni system. "A change that has not been done in the last generation."

Maps and graphs lined the hall and several Muni and Transit Effectiveness Project staff persons were there to make a presentation and then answer questions about the proposals to transform Muni service.

Before changing any routes in the city, Muni's goal is to make their current system safer and reliable.

Long term, plans are to make the City's transportation scheme more convenient, attractive, predictable and reliable.

After recent Muni studies, surveys show that buses on busy corridors like Stockton and Mission travel at about 6 mph.

The speed of the buses affects the budget of the Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA). In order to keep lines on time and persistent, more buses and operators (drivers) are needed on busy routes like the 14-Mission.

In the last decade, Muni has become very slow and unreliable. This has been caused by street congestions, causing delays.

Muni plans to resolve these issues by updating update its routes, making a more realistic schedule, but most importantly, enforcing rules to clear lanes for Muni.

The MTA also plans to reduce travel times to its riders. This will be accomplished by decreasing boarding periods.

Some ideas for this is to purchase more low-floor buses, (similar to the Low-Floor Hybrid buses being used today) build "Bus Bulbs" that extend from the sidewalk so busses would not have to pull in and out of traffic and install ticket vending machine to busy stops.

The MTA also makes passenger and pedestrian safety a priority.

Some other ideas are to:

*Allocate service where ridership is greatest.

*Reduce or eliminate service on least productive routes.

*Establish routes that are easy to understand.

*Increase Limited Stop service on certain routes.

*Transit-only lanes and street designs that allow bypassing backups at intersections.

*"Smart" traffic signals that give priority to buses and trains.

Muni also hopes to employ 150 new operators next year (replacing retirees) and employ adequate street supervisors to increase reliable service, in addition to route changes and other proposals.

Muni plans to make a few major changes to the transportation of Visitacion Valley, specifically that of the 56-Rutland line.

The proposal to eliminate this community service route received a lot of opposition. Though the 9-San Bruno would "service" the lower part of the hill, 'upper Valley' residents would face a challenge

hiking the hills every day (Though most do anyway because of the 56's lack of service). It is uncertain, but the 9 would run across Campbell Avenue from Rutland to San Bruno, according to the TEP's Proposed Transit Map (It is doubtful that the articulated busses would handle the sharp turns and steep hills).

Cynthia Cox, a resident of the valley who was able to attend the meeting, challenged the Muni personnel to climb the hills and do the walks that would result from the elimination of the 56.

Visitacion Valley residents — specifically the seniors — were not too content about the proposed changes. Though the changes will make it more difficult to transport around the valley, buses will run more frequently and make more "direct trips."

On the other hand, city residents like Ido Akov, from Pacific Heights, who didn't get a chance to attend one of the TEP meetings is excited about the changes, stating that "the conversion of the Muni system would decrease his daily commute and make its more easier and enjoyable."

The riders of the 9x-Bayshore Express would also face some route changes. The 9x would be routed to run on Arleta both directions instead of running on Visitacion Avenue when headed outbound direction (City College). According to Muni, more frequent service would be provided between Chinatown and Visitacion Valley on the 9x by these changes.

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Community Based Organizations Join Together Putting Residents to Work

by Jennifer Dhillon

Many of Visitacion Valley's Community Based Organizations (CBO's) are joining forces to make sure that Visitacion Valley is prepared to train and place our residents in upcoming job sites in the neighborhood. Several major projects are underway or in the pipeline. These projects will provide construction jobs, environmental clean up, jobs in the trades such as plumbing and electrical work, and work in retail and offices when the projects are completed.

Visitacion Valley's CBO's work together on a regular basis, sharing information and supplying different roles toward helping people find jobs, get family support assistance and working to improve Visitacion Valley's economic standing. Currently, the Visitacion Valley Community Development Corporation is working with Florence Crittenton Services and Anders & Anders in a program called VV JobNet located at the Village. VV JobNet is the place to go for residents of the Valley who are interested in being trained for work in construction. The coursework is rigorous, but those who successfully complete the training academy called CityBuild, are eligible to join the union at excellent starting rates.

Other organizations work toward training residents. For example, The Visitacion Valley Beacon holds regular job training classes through Goodwill Industries. The training helps those who have little job experience to gain training and references to work at Goodwill and elsewhere.

Jennifer Dhillon is the Executive Director of VVCDC.

Mayor Honors San Francisco Teachers

As part of the second annual *Thank a Teacher Today Campaign*, Mayor Gavin Newsom on May 21 announced the 10 winners of his 2007-08 Mayor's Teacher of the Month Award.

Included in the awards was Elizabeth Abrahams, an instructor at Visitacion Valley Middle School.

In 2006, Mayor Newsom established the first of its kind San Francisco Mayor's Teacher of the Month Award to recognize outstanding San Francisco public school teachers for their dedication, professionalism, and work on behalf of our

The C.L.A.E.R. Project helps residents impacted by violence to meet the needs of their families and addresses issues economic, political and social disparity.

VVBOOM works with the business community to help invigorate the business climate to attract more retail and other opportunities to the area. Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA) supports Valley residents by advocating for local hiring and access to services for the Asian speaking community.

These Valley CBO's and their many partners and collaborations are helping to build an unprecedented network of supportive services for residents. Working together, we are preparing to put our own to work at Schlage Lock, building the new library, updating the streetscape on Leland Avenue, and working to rebuild Sunnydale (to name just a few upcoming projects). We will continue to keep you posted and to provide more information to residents on how to get involved. For more information, please plan to join us for Summer Jam on June 7 at the Visitacion Valley Playground at Leland Avenue and Cora Street from 1 to 3 p.m. Summer Jam will provide information on Goodwill training, summer program for kids and college tours for young adults.

For more information on the VV JobNet Program, please visit vvcd.org/jobnet.html or call Mindy Flor at 415-385-5721 or Terry Anders at 415-309-6330. Visit JobNet at the Village at 1099 Sunnydale Ave.

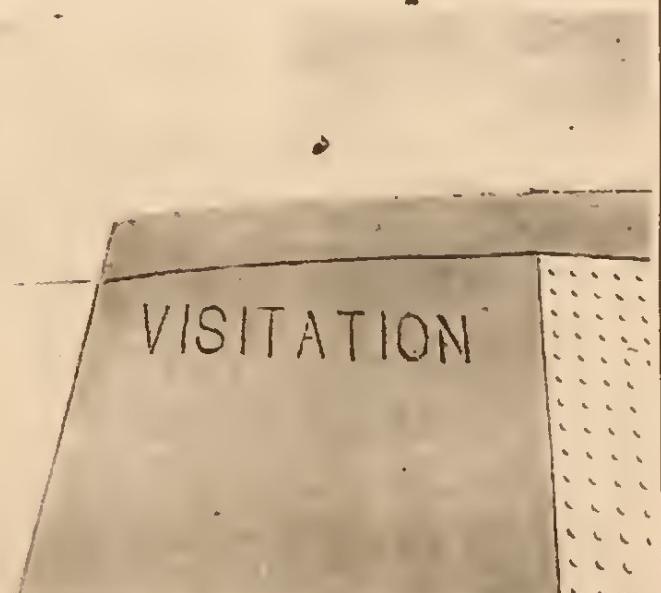
Jennifer Dhillon is the Executive Director of VVCDC.

City's young people.

"I have met many of the dedicated teachers who are providing quality education to our students during my weekly school visits," said Mayor Newsom. "The Teacher of the Month Award allows me to commend their tireless efforts in shaping and influencing San Francisco's children."

Teachers receiving the award are nominated by parents, youth, educators, administrators, and other community members for excellence in their classroom, their school, and their City.

Time to "Check" Your Spell Check



One of two glaring errors on Visitacion Avenue enshrined in cement.

by Russel Morine

We know this all to well in Visitacion Valley. How many times have you caught the novice spellers can type merrily along confident that those little squiggle red lines will flag your errors.

Mistakes will happen and generally they can be easily corrected. Unfortunately this cannot be said for the monumental spell check error forever stamped in concrete at the intersection of Visitacion

Street and Desmond Street. DPW got in wrong. Two of the four brand new wheelchair accessible curb replacements incorrectly use the "T" instead of the "C".

Grapevine Mailbox

Violent Crime Meeting

Following is a letter sent May 6 to Theresa Sparks, president of the San Francisco Police Commission from Police Chief Heather Fong:

Dear President Sparks:

I am writing in regards to the Police Commission Subcommittee meeting on Violent Crime which took place in the Visitacion Valley on November 1, 2007. At that meeting, a number of ideas and suggestions were presented by participants.

Many of these will be considered as part of the ongoing initiative to enhance public safety in Visitacion Valley. Participants stressed the need for the community to be able to trust officers, and for officers to be sensitive to those residents who have experienced numerous incidents of violent crime. Speakers also acknowledged that community problems are not a police issue alone.

I will examine each of these observations, concerns, and recommendations and discuss what can be done to act on those which are feasible and within the Department's jurisdiction.

Appreciation was expressed for the good work done by officers on bicycles. Bicycle patrol, like foot patrol, is an important part of community policing, and consistent bicycle patrols are to be encouraged whenever personnel resources allow. In fact, many of our foot beat officers are cross-trained in bicycle patrol. These cross-trained officers use a combination of foot and bicycle patrol. Bicycle patrol allows for officers to have direct contact with the community as well as providing the community with a rapid response to calls for service.

There was a recommendation that there be better coordination with probation and parole services. The Department maintains a unit (the FRET Unit) that is infrequent, sometimes daily contact with Adult and Juvenile Probation as well as State Parole. The FRET Unit provides relevant information to the Ingleside Station officers upon learning of those being released from incarceration on a grant of probation or parole. Ingleside officers also participate in the biweekly Cease Fire meeting where representatives of multiple law enforcement agencies discuss violence reduction strategies.

Attendees expressed that they would like to see more officers on buses. The Department has an existing program that requires officers to ride buses twice per shift. Given that there are several Muni bus lines running through Visitacion Valley, an enhanced officer presence on these bus lines can be instituted consistent with monitoring of crime patterns. Captain O'Leary has been directed to implement a plan to meet this goal. The Department also has a Muni Response Team (MRT) that regularly rides and patrols buses. This unit also maintains crime statistics on Muni and disseminates this information to district captains in an effort to prevent crime.

Concern about the Gang Task Force was expressed by two persons. The work of the Gang Task Force is essential in identifying gang members involved in

violent actions both inside and outside Visitacion Valley. Representatives from the Gang Task Force attending community meetings, (or at a Visitacion Valley police-community forum), could explain GTF's role and would allow for the community to express their concerns. Captain O'Leary has been directed to coordinate implementation of this plan in coordination with Lt. Ferrando of the Gang Task Force.

Attendees expressed a wish to see more officers on foot patrols. Much like bicycle patrols, foot patrol officers are very visible and have direct interaction with community members. Four officers are already dedicated to foot patrol in the Sunnydale neighborhood. Most of the rest of the Visitacion Valley, including Leland Avenue, does not have consistent foot patrols. The possibility of a regularly scheduled foot beat in this area, even if for a portion of a shift, would bring needed police visibility to the area. The department is evaluating the recent report issued by PSSG. Commander Murphy is working with the consultant to redefine the department's foot beat deployment policy.

"Better follow-up by police on accidents" and "More bilingual police employees." This was brought up in the context of non-English speakers. The Department's newly-implemented LEP policy should go a long way in ensuring that LEP individuals receive accurate and complete information about how to follow up on accidents and crime incidents. The Department encourages its members to qualify as bilingual by taking the DHR administered bilingual exams.

"Restrict gun sales." There are no licensed gun sellers in the Visitacion Valley area. The Department approaches the issue of getting guns off the street in several ways. One is to conduct gun buy-backs. A gun buy-back could potentially be set up in Visitacion Valley. The Department is also setting up an "Operation Gun Stop" program. Callers would be able to anonymously provide information about the location of illegal guns and receive a reward when their information results in the seizure of illegal firearms.

"More surveillance cameras." The issue of the crime prevention capability and overall impact of surveillance cameras is unclear at this time. This is an MOCJ program with all new camera installations subject to the approval of the Police Commission. The camera program is currently being evaluated.

It was brought up that there is a need to educate the community on how to report crime. The Department does this in various ways such as the Captains' emails and SFPD web page which includes a website that allows for on-line reporting of certain crimes. In addition, SF SAFE is an organization that assists the Department with bringing information to the community. This could be done in a series of community meetings in the area, with SF SAFE as the lead presenter.

"Work needs to be done to put together community patrols." SF SAFE can work with community groups to set up neighborhood watches and, in conjunction with the Police Department, discuss the potential benefits of community patrols. Captain O'Leary has been directed to coordinate with community representatives and SF SAFE to enhance existing, or implement new programs that best serve the needs of the community.

"Seniors need to see more police." Enhanced visibility of officers, through, for example, foot and bicycle patrols, benefits seniors and all other members of the community. A special community forum focused on seniors can be scheduled in conjunction with senior centers in the district.

There were some suggestions

made that are beyond the jurisdiction of the Police Department.

One example is the desire that gun sales at the Cow Palace be ended. The Cow Palace is in Daly City, not San Francisco. This is not an issue, the Department is in a position to address. The Department does coordinate with other law enforcement agencies to take enforcement efforts when appropriate. Mayor Newsom and District Attorney Harris have pushed for the State Legislature to implement such a restriction.

"A 'Safe Haven' for children is needed in Visitacion Valley." There is a program as part of a Weed and Seed grant. A Department Bulletin will be issued and information will be disseminated to the community.

"Improvements needed in street lighting." Officers will be reminded to call in to dispatch any non-functioning light standards. Captain O'Leary will remind residents through his station newsletter that non-working signs & street lights should be reported to 311 so that they can be repaired or replaced. Also, Captain O'Leary shall coordinate with 311 to provide education for CBOs and neighborhoods.

"Better coordination needed among city agencies." As this letter outlines, the Police Department is committed to strengthening coordination with other agencies such as MONS, DPW, 311, HSA, SFUSD, SFHA, DPH, etc.

"Substation requested for Visitacion Valley and Kiosk needed on Leland Avenue." The presence of more officers in the area, particularly foot and bicycle officers, would allow for more regular police-community contacts. These types of alternative deployment strategies will be considered as part of the organizational studies being conducted in conjunction with the Controller's Office.

"CBOs are not doing their job. Visitacion Valley only getting the crumbs of the CBO money." This is a concern more appropriately brought to the attention of the Mayor's Office and other city agencies that fund programs. A letter will be sent to Director Ryan of MOCJ for follow-up. It would be helpful for the Department to have an updated citywide list so that we can make referrals.

"More jobs and housing needed." This is not something the Police Department has direct control over, but will work with designated agencies to improve outreach. The Department's Recruiting Unit will also actively recruit applicants for vacant and new positions within the Department.

"Vis Valley needs facilities and leadership for youth" and "More programs and resources for youth." Again, this is not something the Police Department has direct control over. The Police Department does, however, offer a number of programs for youths. These include the Wilderness Program, the Fishing Program, and the Police Activities League. These excellent programs should be publicized in the Visitacion Valley community. Also, the School Resource Officer program is active in Visitacion Valley and provides for positive interactions between young people and officers.

I have directed FOB Deputy Chief Kevin Cashman to work with Captain O'Leary to monitor progress and ensure that the steps outlined in this letter are implemented, and to report back to the Police Commission on the progress that has been attained in making Visitacion Valley safer for all.

Sincerely,
Heather J. Fong, Chief of Police

Grapevine on the Web
Read current and past stories from the Visitacion Valley Grapevine at www.visitacionvalleygrapevine.com.

Combined Police Districts a Bad Idea

In the following letter, Marlene Tran, spokesperson for the Visitacion Valley Asians Alliance comments on a recent Police Effectiveness Review recommending the San Francisco Police Department close five stations and combine districts which preceded a May 19 meeting at City Hall:

Hi Neighbors:

Surprisingly, fewer people than I had expected attended the Police Meeting at City Hall last night.

To further be involved in community safety, I am currently a member of the Visitacion Valley Community Response Network and also on the Community Advisory Board of the SFPD's Fair & impartial Project.

During my 35+ years of teaching newly-arrived immigrant families, I have also advocated for their language and other needs, and even assisted some crime victims in police and court matters.

The May 15 Chronicle story headlined "Close 5 Police Stations for Safer S.F., Study Says" had astounding recommendations from the Police Effectiveness Review. Last night I took time off from my evening adult teaching to attend this meeting because I had hope to provide additional input from the immigrant communities to this study.

After you have read the 100+ page report, you'd agree that some of the data gathering processes of the Police Safety Strategies Group (PSSG) was inadequate to make such big SFPD recommendations:

1. It is a known fact that communities with newer and English-handicapped residents (and especially those from politically-repressed backgrounds) are less likely to report crimes. Therefore, crime reports from those precincts are known to be underreported. This week, I checked with our three CCSF evening classes, with many beginners of English, and they too cannot accept the report that Ingleside Station has the third least number of crimes — especially from the crime victims themselves! For years I had to correct the Chinese media to properly translate our Visitacion Valley name because of its past connotations of a "crime-ridden" community in the "Cow Palace" neighborhood. If crime rates in Visitacion Valley are listed in this report as the third lowest, why do all the media still portray us as a "high crime" neighborhood?

2. Many limited-English residents are not computer-literate, nor do they have access to computers to respond to this survey online. Therefore, their input is also underreported for the statistical studies.

3. The surveys were not strategically distributed to get a good random sampling, especially amongst the very sizable immigrant population in the southeast sector. How many immigrant-targeted CBOs in District 10 were surveyed? How many responses were gathered from the 94134 and 94124 zipcodes? Was there a statistically significant number of participants? Why not include folks from the Neighborhood Response Team who are very knowledgeable of community safety matters?

4. Did the PSSG report have a breakdown of the percentage of survey locations, ethnicity of the respondents, and residents' precinct, etc., which are also crucial to this study?

5. Did PSSG provide this recommendation to all the ethnic media already?

6. Please note that for non-drivers living in the Ingleside precinct, it is not readily accessible. Therefore, I recommend the addition of a sub-police station for easy crime reporting and to keep in touch with our residents by holding meetings in our own community.

7. The Chinese "sentences" in the beginning of the S.F. Police Effectiveness Review web report did not provide a short report of the cur-

rent recommendations — but of a past meeting on April 16th. How about the Spanish and Russian versions?

8. Supervisor Mirkarimi wanted the current police reporting forms to be available in different languages to help more victims report crimes. Actually, several years ago, I had assisted Captain Bruce with a bilingual version to help victims make the reports but it still hasn't been finalized by SFPD yet.

9. I was very gratified to hear the supportive comments from Supervisors Mirkarimi and Duffy, and S.F. Commissioners Lee and Campos regarding more services and input needed for the immigrant communities. Commissioner Yee pointed out that the non-English respondents in this survey was less than 10 percent. This current report on page 44 showed that only 138 such responses were received! If surveys were not distributed strategically in community-based organizations with high concentrations of immigrants (such as Bayview and Visitacion Valley), it is not only a waste of money to translate the questionnaires into Russian, Spanish and Chinese but their input is really not included for the study.

10. Non-English residents are very reluctant to attend the English-only meetings in City Hall. Why not enlighten more residents to understand and be more involved with our city government by dubbing Spanish and Chinese of the proceedings under the pictures? Hopefully our Mayor and Board of Supervisors will support this recommendation soon.

11. City Hall guards at the entrances should be better informed of meeting rooms to better direct people.

12. At this meeting, one resident living in Visitacion Valley pointed out that in 2007, nine out of the 16 homicides in our City happened in his very own community! Therefore, the crime graph on the Chronicle headline did not really represent the real situation in our community. (If only this were true, then our real estate would appreciate much more, right?) Our community needs more law enforcement, so we don't want this crime under-reporting to negatively affect our needs.

13. San Francisco is very proud to have the multilingual #311 line to enable our diverse residents to get more access to our City government. Mayor Newsom said it was so successful that it fielded a million calls in a few short months! Now, if more residents are aware of this avenue of access to City government, there would likely be more crime victims making reports.

14. Actually, some crime victims lamented to me that since the police reports are English-only and there are usually no police follow-ups to their cases, they lose trust in the SFPD. Those from Hong Kong frequently ask why there are so many available officers around but so few in San Francisco? What can SFPD do to earn their trust so that all residents can be "eyes and ears" of law enforcement?

15. In the future, our City must hire vendors or contractors who can demonstrate that they will have real mechanisms to include input from residents of different language, cultural and other backgrounds. The current PSSG shows a great lack of sensitivity in their data research.

16. Actually, if the PSSG representatives who were present at the City Hall proceeding really wanted to get input from community activists and CBOs for further input, then why didn't they ask for their contact information on the spot at the City Hall meeting?

17. The turn-around time to contact most residents (especially the non-English communities who needed translation) about this SFPD Police Effectiveness Review on May 14 was so short that it was difficult to get residents to attend the City Hall meeting. See Next Page

Grapevine Mailbox

From Page 2

18. In consideration of the budget crisis, but to respect the right of diverse citizens to know of this police report, the PSSC should provide short multilingual summaries of their recommendations.

19. To maximize effective involvement of all citizens, the SPPD should give periodic multilingual surveys to residents who attend police meetings to get ongoing input. This is the smart practice of all well-run corporations.

20. In addition to the City Hall meeting on May 19, all 10 precinct captains should get further input directly from their own district residents in their upcoming community meetings. Make sure the immigrant groups are also invited.

21. The PSSC did not give any ballpark figures of the costs when they presented their recommendations. Therefore, it's hard for residents to understand or make recommendations.

22. Based on the comments/input/recommendations made at this City Hall meeting, how will PSSC provide follow-ups to residents? Marlene Tran, VVA Spokesperson

Facts on Auto Burglaries

Generally speaking, try not to leave anything in your car at any time. Even valuable objects like newspapers and water bottles give an auto burglar the impression that the vehicle owner is careless, and may have left something of value behind that is out of sight. Even if you do not have anything stashed away in your trunk or glove box, you don't need the added hassle of replacing a window or door lock.

The only things one might keep in his or her vehicle, without too much risk of provoking a break-in, are the vehicle insurance and registration. Even so, do not leave the originals. Make photocopies. They are perfectly legal. Do not use hide-a-keys either. They won't stay hidden for long. A practiced auto burglar, or auto thief, knows just where to look, and makes a point of doing so whenever he breaks into a car.

If you have trouble hanging on to your keys, think about purchasing a key chain that can be affixed to your pocket or purse.

These maxims may be difficult if not impossible to live by during the holiday season if we are exchanging presents or combining errands at multiple destinations. The best course of action would be to plan one's outings carefully, so that you don't load your trunk until you're ready to head home. When that is not possible, at the very least, do not load your trunk until you are ready to drive to another destination. Never open a trunk, fill it full of valuables, close it, and then just walk away. Opportunists stay on the lookout for such missteps, and break into the car the minute the driver is out of sight. Plan your excursions so that you load your trunk and lock it up before you drive to your next destination.

When you get to where ever you're going, park in well lighted, well traveled areas. Do your best to park in parking lots or garages with an attendant present. If you park on the street do not park in lightly traveled areas like alleys or side streets. Auto burglars prefer breaking into cars where they will not be observed, and choose their targets accordingly.

Auto burglaries may occur in parking garages as well. If you use a valet, give him the ignition lock only, lock the trunk release, and find out where he plans to park the car. If he plans to park it on the street, or an unattended lot, you may as well just park it yourself. Make sure you know what is inside your trunk before you arrive at a valet parking operation, and make sure that everything you put inside the trunk is still there when you get ready to leave. Look inside it before you take off.

If you suspect that a valet has taken

something from your car, call for police assistance, and tell the communications dispatcher why you think the suspect is still at the scene.

We may continue to observe certain precautions at the end of the day when we drive home as well. If you park on the street, the guidelines listed above still apply. Do not store valuables in your car overnight. Neither should you store valuables in your car if you park in an apartment.

The common areas of an apartment building are one of the easiest targets on the criminal venue. Burglars and unscrupulous co-conspirators alike have all the time in the world to case your vehicle, break into it, and squirrel away the objects inside without the inconvenience of being observed.

If you own a home with a private garage, remember that garage burglaries are quite common. The security devices used on our garages are often quite easily defeated. Should you wish to take added measures to secure your garage, think about installing a padlock on the interior side of the door.

Finally, one of the most effective deterrents of vehicle theft is an auto burglary alarm. Although most of the cars that are manufactured these days come equipped with alarms, older models might benefit from one. When purchasing an alarm make certain it comes with an activation light that tells everyone passing by, from burglars to casual observers, that the vehicle is equipped with one. If the alarm comes with a pilfering sensor, make sure the device is not set at too sensitive a level. Vehicles with over-active alarms often end up being towed for disturbing your neighbors' peace. Being neighborly is, after all, one of our most important observations. Your neighbor may be the one who calls the police if someone breaks into your car.

San Francisco SAFE

Comments Made in 1955

That's only 53 years ago!

"I'll tell you one thing, if things keep going the way they are, it's going to be impossible to buy a week's groceries for \$20."

"Have you seen the new cars coming out next year? It won't be long before \$2,000 will only buy a used one."

"If cigarettes keep going up in price, I'm going to quit. A quarter a pack is ridiculous."

"Did you hear the post office is thinking about charging a dime just to mail a letter?"

"If they raise the minimum wage to \$1, nobody will be able to hire outside help at the store."

"When I first started driving, who would have thought gas would someday cost 29 cents a gallon. Guess we'd be better off leaving the car in the garage."

"Kids today are impossible. Those duck tail haircuts make it impossible to stay groomed. Next thing you know, boys will be wearing their hair as long as the girls."

"I'm afraid to send my kids to the movies any more. Ever since they let Clark Gable get by with saying 'damn' in *Gone with the Wind*, it seems every new movie has either 'hell' or 'damn' in it."

"I read the other day where some scientist thinks it's possible to put a man on the moon by the end of the century. They even have some fellows they call astronauts preparing for it down in Texas."

"Did you see where some baseball player just signed a contract for \$75,000 a year just to play ball? It wouldn't surprise me if someday they'll be making more than the President."

"I never thought I'd see the day all our kitchen appliances would be electric. They are even making electric typewriters now."

"It's too bad things are so tough nowadays. I see where a few married women are having to work to make ends meet."

"It won't be long before young couples are going to have to hire someone to watch their kids so they can both work."

"Marriage doesn't mean a thing anymore. Those Hollywood stars seem to be getting divorced at the drop of a hat."

"I'm afraid the Volkswagen car is going to open the door to a whole lot of foreign business."

"Thank goodness I won't live to see the day when the Government takes half our income in taxes. I sometimes wonder if we are electing the best people to congress."

"The drive-in restaurant is convenient in nice weather, but I seriously doubt they will ever catch on."

"There is no sense going to Lincoln or Omaha anymore for a weekend. It costs nearly \$15 a night to stay in a hotel."

"No one can afford to be sick anymore. At \$35 a day in the hospital, it's too rich for my blood."

"If they think I'll pay 50 cents for a haircut, forget it."

VVBOOM Outreach

To the Visitacion Valley community:

I wanted to let you know I've arranged periodic meetings with Captain O'Leary (of Ingleside Station).

We sat down last week and decided that a monthly merchant walk would be the best way to serve the Leland Avenue business corridor.

In this arrangement, I (along with Sinead, VVBOOM bilingual assistant) will inform merchants a week or two in advance that Captain O'Leary will be making stops in businesses and request merchants have specific issues in mind to address with the Captain. This way, we can have more efficient use of our time when we (Captain O'Leary, Sinead and myself) go business to business along Leland and discuss safety issues with the merchants.

Our first outreach effort will occur the afternoon of Friday, June 6th.

Thank you,

Nick Wolff, VVBOOM

State Taxpayers Warned of Email Scam

Franchise Tax Board (FTB) on May 19 warned taxpayers of two current scams involving FTB and identity theft.

"Taxpayers should protect their personal information and treat any unsolicited emails with caution," said State Controller and FTB Chair John Chiang. "Contact FTB immediately if you have any concerns."

The first scam involves an email "phishing" for taxpayer data. The email masquerades as offering to check the status of your state income tax refund.

Scams of this nature attempt to lure people into revealing personal and financial information, such as Social Security, bank account or credit card numbers, which may be used to steal that taxpayer's identity.

The second scam involves a

phony letter informing the taxpayer his or her tax return may be audited. The letter refers the taxpayer to a fake FTB address in Georgia. In addition, both the email and the letter contain misspellings and grammatical errors. Taxpayers who receive such a notice should contact FTB at 800.852.5711.

FTB has several policies in place to protect the safety and security of taxpayer information. The agency never collects confidential taxpayer information through email or phone solicitation. FTB warns taxpayers against providing personal information over the telephone or via email to those who cannot verify they are FTB employees.

The FTB's Information Privacy policy is available online at http://www.ftb.ca.gov/individuals/id_theft.html

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The FTB's Information Privacy policy is available online at http://www.ftb.ca.gov/individuals/id_theft.html

The second scam involves a

phony letter informing the taxpayer his or her tax return may be audited. The letter refers the taxpayer to a fake FTB address in Georgia. In addition, both the email and the letter contain misspellings and grammatical errors. Taxpayers who receive such a notice should contact FTB at 800.852.5711.

The FTB's Information Privacy policy is available online at http://www.ftb.ca.gov/individuals/id_theft.html

The second scam involves a

VISITACION VALLEY GRAPEVINE • JUNE 2008 • 3

Visitacion Valley Elementary School Wins Title I Achieving School Award

For the third time in four years, Visitacion Valley Elementary School (VVES) on April 22 received a state Title I Achieving School Award in Los Angeles from the California Department of Education.

Principal Vincent Chao and first grade teacher Mindy Yip were present at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza to receive a plaque and banner from State Superintendent of Schools Jack O'Connell.

During the 2006-07 school year, the API of Little Vis was 784. Once again, the API score increased to 804 for 2007-08. API scores over 800 are marks of Education Excellence.

Every year, Mr. Chao challenges his students to beat the STAR test

California Department of Education
Visitacion Valley Elementary

Title I Academic Achievement Award School
2008

4/26/08

score of the previous year. Back at school, the principal again made good on his annual wager with the students and dressed like a clown for a day.

Mayor Challenges 2007 Census Estimate

Mayor Gavin Newsom recently initiated an informal challenge to the 2007 Census population estimate for the City and County of San Francisco based on a recent report that estimates there are 864,515 people living in San Francisco – almost 100,000 more than the estimated 764,976. Filing this challenge may allow San Francisco to receive more federal and state funding.

"Every San Franciscan counts, and I am serious about ensuring San Francisco receives our fair share of federal and state funding and attention," said Mayor Newsom. "We can use this new data to attract high quality retailers to our underserved markets and make sure we develop the neighborhoods that have been unfairly undercounted."

San Francisco is the first California city to file a 2007 Census challenge. Mayor Newsom submitted a letter to the Population Division of the US Census Bureau on April 29, and his staff is currently working with City departments to complete extensive supporting data and required information worksheets for the challenge.

The challenge materials will be submitted by the end of June, and the Mayor's Office of Com-

munity Development (MOCD) will work closely with Census Bureau staff to correct the population estimate.

According to a 1999 US Conference of Mayors report on the Census, for each person not counted in the Census, it represents an average loss of \$2,263 for the decade. Conceptually, if the difference between Census 2000 (776,733) and the Social Compact report data (864,515) which is 87,782 was calculated and multiplied by \$2,263, it would equal over \$198 million in lost federal and state funding for the decade.

A recent "DrillDown" study completed by national nonprofit expert Social Compact serves as the foundation for the Census challenge. Social Compact utilized commercial, proprietary, local government sources and other data beyond the 2000 Census to build a body of more refined, accurate and timely data in order to develop an alternative assessment of population, income and the local economy.

MOCD and the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development (MOEWD) will continue to work utilizing the new data to further support community and workforce reinvestment efforts.

New Law Would Combat Recycling Theft

by Assemblywoman Fiona Ma
CPA-Majority Whip

My office has received countless complaints from neighbors in the 12th Assembly District who have been awakened in the middle of the night from people rummaging through recycling bins. Some of you may be shocked to learn that many of these poachers are part of very well organized operations

that make large profits from stealing CRV materials such as aluminum cans and glass bottles.

In San Francisco and cities across the state, thieves who operate as organized fleets wake residents, throw unwanted materials on the ground, and trespass on private property. Their theft can also increase garbage rates and increase the risk of identity theft. The poaching rings use large trucks that are overloaded with recycled materials and then drive to a local junk dealer to get cash for the material.

CRV containers are not the only materials being targeted. Newspaper stands are also common targets for poaching rings. In the East Bay, free weekly newspapers have been routinely targeted by thieves. Delivery trucks will drop off bundles of newspapers only to have them taken and thrown in the back of large trucks that follow closely behind.

I have introduced legislation in response to this growing trend and I am happy to report that it successfully passed the Assembly

with bipartisan support last month. Assembly Bill 1778, which will be heard in the Senate this month, provides law enforcement with valuable record keeping information to investigate these crime rings.

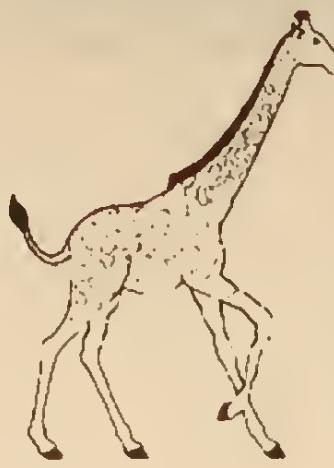
Specifically, the bill requires recyclers to obtain identifying information of individuals who bring in large quantities (\$50 or more) of CRV recyclables and newspapers. The bill will also require that payments of \$50 or more be made by check.

Although AB 1778 was opposed by certain recycling companies that fought recordkeeping requirements, representatives from local recycler Norcal joined with me to support the bill. During discussions in the Assembly, there was some confusion about the quantity of materials that would have to be recycled. The \$50 threshold is equal to 34 pounds of aluminum – the equivalent of 1,000 cans.

This bill does not interfere with the typical recycling load and I worked closely with homeless advocates to ensure that someone trying to make a living would not be impacted by the provisions of the bill. However, there is simply no excuse for someone to bring in thousands of cans and no identification, and walk out with cash.

AB 1778 is currently in the Senate where it will be heard in committee in June. If passed by the Senate and signed by the Governor, the law will go into effect on January 1, 2009.

Into the Wild World of Reading



reading helps children to keep and improve their reading skills that they've developed during the school year. Starting June 14th, all children can sign up for the Summer Reading Club at any branch of the San Francisco Public Library, including the Main Library. They can read any book they like in any language at any place and get incentives from their local libraries.

There is also a Teen Summer Reading Program (ages 13 to 18) that is free and fun. Teens can earn cool prizes for hours spent reading. Additionally, participants will be eligible to win grand prizes such as gift certificates, an iPod shuffle, and Zune MP3 players. How about helping the librarians with summer reading program? Children between the ages of 10 and 16 can do some volunteer work during the summer to learn how the library operates and gain some precious work experience. Ask your local librarian for details.

Reading is important for everyone. Why should kids have all the fun! We are proud to announce that Visitacion Valley Public Library (45 Leland Ave, San Francisco) is launching the first Adult Summer Reading Program starting June 14th. No registration is needed and no library card is required. The rules are that you read any book and go to the Visitacion Valley Library to pick up a review slip. Write something about the book you have read and put the slip into the drawing box. You will get a chance to win prizes or gift certificates at various local stores.

The more you read and enter your reviews, the higher your chance to win!

Wow, so many activities and so much fun! Are you ready? Join us at the library for an exciting summer.

State Senate Passes Rent Control Bill

State Senator Carole Migden's SB 1299, requiring the Legislative Analyst's Office to study the economic and social impacts when new condominiums are constructed on properties where price-controlled rental units have been demolished was approved 23-15 on May 22 by the California State Senate.

Guide for Gaining Top Management Support In Construction Safety

To help construction safety professionals gain top management support for construction safety, Construction Safety Software Corporation is offering this free guide: *Guide for Gaining Top Management Support for Construction Safety*. This guide is a step-by-step tutorial on the process involved in gaining top management support for construction safety.

Armed with this guide most safety professionals can effectively begin building the most important ingredient in any contractor's safety program:

- *The guide covers:
- *Why a Contractors Safety Behaviors and Beliefs System (SBBS) Must Continue to Improve
- *Top Management Pressures
- *Preparing to Meet with Top Management
- *How to Get the Safety Information Needed
- *Showing Top Management Why Change is Necessary
- *Obligation to Bear the Consequences
- *Measuring Progress

This guide will be sent free of charge to anyone who calls or sends an e-mail with their address to: Construction Safety Software Corporation, P O Box 6232, Bloomingdale, Illinois 60108-6232.

Phone 630-566-9010 or email: customerservice@csssystems.com

Governor Showcases State Businesses Environmental Innovations

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on May 20 joined with business and environmental leaders to unveil the Environmental Defense Fund's (EDF) inaugural Innovations Review: Making Green the New Business as Usual report, which is the result of a nationwide review of products and practices that increase environmental efficiency and provide savings to businesses.

The event showcased businesses utilizing best practices and new technologies that are both good for the environment and for the economy.

"The Environmental Defense Fund recognized that 'business as usual' is changing, so they created a new way to assess environmental innovation," Governor Schwarzenegger said. "More than a third of the companies showcased are based here. I love it when California is number one and it is a big thrill to see businesses in our state leading the way."

"The one thing these companies have in common is leadership. And leadership is exactly what we need to tackle the enormous challenges of climate change while protecting economic growth."

EDF's inaugural review underscores that California businesses are leading the way in defining greener business practices. The report assessed hundreds of business products, practices and technologies, selecting more than 20 innovations and 31 companies from around the country to highlight in its report. Of those recognized, 11 companies are based in California.

California companies are producing a growing share of green technology patents — 44 percent of all

U.S. patents in solar and 37 percent in wind — and numerous energy efficient products and services.

According to Next 10's "California Green Innovation Index," California represents almost half of all green-tech investment in the U.S., and all signs point to continued growth. In fact, venture capitalists last year invested \$1.78 billion in California green technology companies.

Since 1990, the green business establishments in the state have grown by 84 percent and employment has doubled.

Governor Schwarzenegger has led California in establishing laws and policies to protect the environment:

"In January 2007, the Governor announced the world's first Low Carbon Fuel Standard for transportation fuels that requires fuel providers to reduce the carbon intensity of transportation fuels sold in California. This first-of-its-kind standard firmly establishes sustainable demand for lower-carbon fuels without favoring one fuel over another. To start, the standard will reduce the carbon intensity of California's passenger vehicle fuels by at least 10 percent by 2020 and more thereafter."

"In September 2006, the Governor signed the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, California's landmark bill that established a first-in-the-world comprehensive program of regulatory and market mechanisms to achieve real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. The law will reduce carbon emissions in California to 1990 levels by the year

2020. Governor Schwarzenegger has also called for the state to reduce carbon emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2050.

"In August 2006, the Governor signed his Million Solar Roofs Plan into law, which will provide 3,000 megawatts of additional clean energy and reduce the output of greenhouse gases by three million tons, equivalent to taking one million cars off the road. The \$2.9 billion incentive plan for homeowners and building owners who install solar electric systems will lead to one million solar roofs in California by the year 2018."

Going "Green" Easy

With over 30 percent of Americans willing to pay 20 percent more for eco-friendly products, according to the Natural Marketing Institute, companies are developing more environmentally conscious products and offerings that are good for consumers' health and the planet. These include:

*Plastic made from 100 percent natural, renewable plants grown on American soil.

*What's known as sustainable materials, such as organically grown natural fibers (e.g., hemp, silk, cotton and wool), soy-based inks, bio-plastics and man-made celluloses, which reduce harmful chemical and energy use

*Hydrogen fuel cells for powering cell phones

*Solar-powered laptop bags using a single solar panel for charging laptops

*Reusable grocery bags.

NAPS

Schlage Lock - Why Remember?

by Betty Parshall

Overheard in the Joe Leland's Coffee Shop: three high schoolers were talking about the library design drawings on the wall. They were joking that they'd go there every Saturday. Then one said, "We'll be away at college by the time it's done." All too true, unfortunately.

Then they turned to the Schlage Lock plans.

Teen one: that's gonna be hecka cool if they build it.

Teen two: I used to think that was a school. I told my grandma that I didn't want to go there, it looked so bad, but she told me it used to be a lock factory.

Teen One: Locks?

Teen Two: some type of locks, for the houses.

Teen One: Oh....

At least grandma had told them a tiny bit of the story, but if they go off to college they will never know why Schlage was important to their neighborhood, their city, and in fact, their country.

Edie Epps and I joined the Schlage Lock employees' annual reunion dinner in April. Nearly 80 people were there, many of whom had traveled long distances to join their former co-workers, catch up with one another and remember their years at Schlage. Edie was able to speak for two minutes to let them know about the plan to preserve Schlage's history in Visitacion Valley, and the response was enthusiastic, to say the least.

Several people spoke about their work experience and said that everyone was treated equally, from the vice presidents to the custodial staff. One man who was the unofficial photographer during the later years had prepared three panels of pictures he had taken, as well as bringing a stack of extra photos. He invited everyone to take any they wanted, and later offered what was left to us. He can provide the names of all the people in the pictures. Steve Kendrick, the grandson of the founder, Charles Kendrick, is very interested in



A Schlage Lock souvenir shirt proudly displayed at the reunion dinner.

history and hopes he can join a tour of the buildings before demolition begins.

There are many possibilities: a collection of photographs, both historical and current; preservation of pieces and elements of the buildings that can be saved before demolition and then incorporated into the new development, for example a flag pole, redwood ceilings, warehouse windows, etc.; oral and video interviews with former workers; a video 'tour' with former workers; and community tours before demolition so that Valley residents can know what the company meant to the residents during its tenure here.

A history display might be lodged in the old office building where it would be accessible to everyone.

Everyone in the community is invited to attend the CAC meetings held on the second Tuesday of each month, and also the History sub-committee meetings held on the second Thursday, at the Sunset Scavenger building on Tunnel Avenue (across the street from the train station). And of course, you are also welcome to stop in at Joe Leland's (next to the B of A parking lot on Leland Avenue) to view the development design drawings. More about Schlage's history will be shared in future Grapevine articles.

-Thanks to Edie Epps and Russel Morine

Summer in City a Great Time to "Shape-Up San Francisco"

A user's guide to the summer programs of the S.F. Recreation and Park Department by Mayor Gavin Newsom

Summer is upon us and there are hundreds of reasons to turn off the television this season and discover, or rediscover, what your local park or recreation center has in store for you.

Our city's Recreation and Park Department offers an array of quality, affordable activities and programs for kids of all ages. Some of these programs are traditional ones— trusty standards like the ones you and I may have participated in when we were youngsters. Others are new, innovative programs that cater to the interests of today's youth.

If you haven't done so in a while, I invite you to take a closer look at what Recreation and Parks has to offer this summer.

Day Camps

Our city's day camp programs continue to be some of the most popular programs in the city year after year, offering a variety of themes from sports and the arts to cooking and nature. Other specialty camps include a science camp run by the Randall Museum and Art in the Park camp at the Sharon Art Studio in Golden Gate Park.

Latchkey Summer Program

Our city's after school Latchkey program provides full-time programming for school-age children during the summer. With 13 sites throughout the city, Latchkey is one of our more popular and affordable summer programs, serving hundreds of kids per year at roughly \$20 per week. Activities include sports, arts and crafts, games, basic cooking lessons and weekly field trips to Bay Area amusement parks.

Aquatics

Learning to swim at one of San Francisco's nine public swimming pools is almost a prerequisite for city residents. Swimming lessons are available daily, Monday through Friday, or, if your kids just want to do some recreational

swimming, they can float around to their hearts' content every day of the week.

Sports

What's a summer without sports? From football and soccer to baseball and tennis, Recreation and Parks provides summer leagues, tournaments and clinics for just about every sport imaginable, for just about every playing level.

Midnight Music

Midnight Music is a citywide music program that provides children with the opportunity to learn how to express themselves innovatively and creatively through music. The program provides children, youth and teens with free lessons, concerts, road shows, workshops and outings, all led by professionals in the local music industry.

Project Insight

Project Insight's programs for the Deaf and visually impaired serve young people, ages 6-19, with recreation-based programs focusing on building physical, social, and living skills. Programs are conducted in American Sign Language but students of all language abilities are accepted into the programs.

For the Entire Family

Volunteer Program

There are many opportunities for citizens to volunteer with the Recreation and Park Department. Volunteer activities include gardening and ecological restoration, leading nature walks, coaching soccer, tutoring students in after school programs, working with seniors and more. Each year, approximately 12,000 park volunteer slots are filled and 42,500 hours of physical labor are donated to the Department's parks; 500 registered recreation volunteers contribute to a variety of athletic, art and cultural programs.

Natural Areas

The city has a diverse array of parks and open spaces — 500 acres of which are considered Natural Areas — that are waiting

Bill to Create State Health Care Program

by Senator Leland Yee

It has become increasingly apparent that our health care system is in crisis. With over six million Californians going without health insurance, it is clear that steps must be taken to expand our access to health care. While the fight continues to establish single payer health care by moving SB 840 to the governor's desk, we must continue to push to bring more people, most of all our children, into existing programs. It was in this spirit that I introduced Senate Bill 1459.

Senate Bill 1459 will create the California Health Care Program (Cal-Health), which would provide health care coverage to 370,000 Californians that are currently without health insurance. Included in this number are approximately 200,000 children. Cal-Health will allow the State to draw additional Federal funding on a 2 to 1 basis. In addition to the elimination of red tape and duplicative programs, this should save California anywhere from \$41 to \$100 million dollars a year.

Senate Bill 1459 works by presuming that children are eligible for either Medi-Cal or Healthy Families, which approximately two-thirds of them are, which will lower administrative overhead, and result in more immediate care for children in

Religious Rally for City Budget Priorities

More than 50 religious leaders from diverse faith traditions will gather in a dramatic presentation to influence San Francisco's budget priorities for poor and homeless people at City Hall (South Light Court) on Thursday, June 5 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. The event is sponsored by Religious Witness with Homeless People.

to be explored. Natural Areas are remnants of San Francisco's historic landscape and contain rich and diverse plant and animal communities that differ dramatically from one another. These communities include oak woodlands, creeks, lakes, grasslands, dunes, scrub and rock outcrops. In many cases, these nature preserves are the only places where wildlife such as the Red-tailed Hawk, Gray Fox, Great-horned Owl, and San Francisco Garter Snake still reside, reproduce and play.

Community Gardening

The San Francisco Recreation and Park Department also supports and manages a program of approximately 40 community gardens on City-owned property. Each garden is operated by a group of committed volunteers who grow ornamentals and produce for personal use on personal and shared plots.

Special Note: The San Francisco Recreation and Park Department has implemented a new registration process for its recreation program offerings. To register for any RPD program from this point forward, you will need to create a "Family Account" that includes all members of your family. When you establish your account, it will allow for a quicker and simpler registration process in the future. Please visit the McLaren Lodge Annex, 501 Stanyan Street, between Fell and Stanyan streets, Monday through Friday, during

regular business hours, with appropriate documents, to enroll in sfreonline.org. For complete information on Recreation and Park Department programs, please call 3-1-1, or visit www.parks.sfgov.org.

VISITACION VALLEY GRAPEVINE - JUNE 2008-5

The list of California cities with average gas prices over \$4 a gallon just keeps getting longer. According to a mid-May report from AAA of Northern California, there were 13 cities in California with an average over \$4 a gallon.

Gas prices continued to set records up and down the state of California, with the statewide average cost for a gallon of regular gasoline on May 13 at a record high \$3.94, a 22-cent increase since the last AAA gas price report on April 8.

The cost of crude oil, the raw material from which gasoline is made, continues to drive retail fuel prices higher. A new record was recently set for crude oil at \$126 a barrel. The rule of thumb in the crude oil — gasoline relationship is for every dollar a barrel of crude oil goes up, gasoline usually follows with an increase of 2.5 cents a gallon.

"These prices are exactly where the Energy Department forecasted they would be — for June," said Michael Geeser, spokesperson for AAA of Northern California. "The fact that we are already paying more than anticipated, along with the realization that we're paying about 50 cents more for gas than we were a year ago at this time

signals a new era for consumers statewide."

The most expensive average gas price in the California communities where AAA monitors fuel costs was in Tahoe City and Yreka, where unleaded gas sold for \$4.10 per gallon. The lowest price among Northern California cities tracked by AAA was in Pleasanton, San Rafael and Tracy, where gas cost an average of \$3.90 per gallon, 25 cents higher than the lowest price in last month's AAA report.

Throughout Northern California, the average price was \$3.96, up 23 cents since the last AAA gas price report. In the Bay Area, the average price was \$4.02, an increase of 16 cents from last month.

The nationwide average price of self-serve regular gasoline was \$3.73, a 40-cent increase from last month's report.

The least expensive gasoline in the country was found in Casper, Wyoming and Tucson, Arizona, where the average price of gas was \$3.45. The highest average price among the lower 48 states was in Tahoe City and Yreka, California where the price was \$4.10. The highest price in the nation was in Wailuku, Hawaii, on the island of Maui, where a gallon of regular cost \$4.18.

Boys & Girls Clubs of San Francisco 2008 Summer Programs



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF SAN FRANCISCO



Experience all we have to offer this summer!

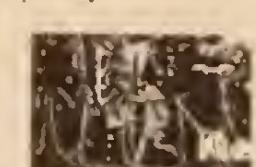
Basic Membership (\$10) — Package includes access to all Boys & Girls Clubs Clubhouses, free lunch and participation in all summer programs. It also gives members the art, character and leadership development, education and career development, health and life skills, and sports fitness and recreation. During the summer, regular programs hours are 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. daily, June 16 through August 13. Those interested in registering for the Mission Clubhouse must speak with Clubhouse staff to sign up.

Early Bird Special (\$150) — Package includes drop off at 8 a.m. and all of the benefits of the Basic Membership package listed above. Only available at Excelsior, Ingold and Columbia Park.

Last of Season Fieldtrip (\$55) — Covers parking, admission in a fun fieldtrip at the end of summer programs. Trips in previous years have included Great America and Waterworld.

Project Discover (\$55) — A six-week summer learning academy and enrichment program for Boys & Girls Club members in grades three through six. To apply please visit [projectdiscover.org](http://www.projectdiscover.org) or call (415) 815-5890. The deadline for applications is April 8.

Camp Mendocino — All applicants can apply for partial scholarships and may attend for as little as \$50 (standard rate is \$250 for a 10-day session). Located in a beautiful redwood forest, Camp Mendocino offers a residential camp experience for youth ages eight to 17 and teen staff ages 16 to 17. Activities include horseback riding, water sports, mountain biking, hiking, petting zoo, archery, environmental education, ropes and challenge course, talent shows, campfires and overnight cookouts. Registration is available at all Clubhouses, online at www.campmendocino.org, or by calling (415) 448-5427.



Clubhouse Programs and Activities Include:

- Swimming
- Educational Programs
- Arts & Crafts
- Sailing
- Health and Life Skills
- Technology
- Sports
- Special Summer Events
- Teepee Programs
- Lifeguard
- Recreation and Games
- Fieldtrips

Pre-Register Now to Hold a Place in Our Summer Program!

Please return this form to your Clubhouse

Name of Child or Teen _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

New Member _____

• Std. Birth

• \$25 End of Summer Special Fieldtrip

• \$150 Early Bird Special

• Camp Mendocino sign-up at your local Club

• Existing Member _____

• Member Number _____

• \$25 End of Summer Special Fieldtrip

• \$150 Early Bird Special

• Camp Mendocino sign-up at your local Club

Note: For new members this is not a full registration form process — in addition to this there application must be completed at the Clubhouse where you wish to sign up.

McLaren Park News and Notes

by Betty Parshall

Improvements in the Park

Due to the special events going on in Visitacion Valley on Saturday, May 17, your Valley representative could not attend the regular meeting of the Friends of McLaren Park, so next month's column will be a 'catch-up' article on the group's activities.

I can report that Yosemite Marsh still has newly-planted areas fenced off, but otherwise the paths and the new deck that crosses the pond are open, and the new benches and tables are installed. One worker there said that the planted areas will be fenced off for a while to give the plants a chance to get well established. But proof that the renovation is a success was the appearance of a pair of mallards and their ducklings within a few weeks of the pond being filled.

One essential item is missing from this beautiful site, a garbage can. Many people had voluntarily put garbage in an old metal utility bin, but that is now covered with a black plastic bag. People are still bagging garbage and placing it on top of this structure. Let's all give the maintenance supervisor, Brian, a call and ask him if a garbage can will be placed at Yosemite Marsh. Brian can be reached at 415-337-4700.

People walking around the reservoir and McNab Lake are also enjoying the ducklings that have hatched recently. There is usually a high attrition rate, as raccoons, hawks and other wildlife consider ducklings a great appetizer or snack; currently at McNab you can see ducklings at different stages, 1 half-grown, 4 a little smaller, and a group of 11 very little guys. The one mother duck at the reservoir rates as a champion, since she started with 12 and still has nine little ones after three or four weeks. It's also nice to hear a redwing blackbird singing from a tree on one of the islands at McNab Lake - the birds were temporarily displaced by the work done at the marsh.

The garbage can note prompts the next item; controlling litter in the park is always a challenge. Not only are many people careless, the wind carries papers and bags to the park, and wild animals scatter picnic leavings. Every day I can fill at least one market plastic bag with garbage. The day I forgot to bring bags from home, I was able to pick a few up from the ground as I started to walk the dog.

This is a plea to help keep McLaren and all our parks beautiful and litter-free. Thinking about how long it takes for common items to biodegrade in a natural area may encourage you:

- *Cigarette butt - 12 years
- *Aluminum can - 80 to 100 years
- *Plastic bag - 10 to 20 years
- *Plastic bottles and foam cups - NEVER

A leaf that falls to the ground takes about a year to break down to its natural elements, but a leaf that goes into land fill never biodegrades because it lacks the light, water and bacterial activity to do so. Every piece of petroleum-based plastic still exists; it breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces, always with us unless it is incinerated. Let's all do our best to dispose of items properly, recycle as much as possible, and teach the youngsters to do so too.

The next workday at McNab Lake is Saturday, June 14 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, raking the weeds out of the water. The lake is looking much better because of water treatment and previous workdays, so join the congenial group and help. Rakes are provided. The next meeting of the Friends of McLaren Park is Saturday, June 21, 10 a.m. to 12 noon, at the Louis Sutter Roundhouse by McNab Lake. Everyone is welcome, refreshments provided.

California New Home Market Now Close to the Bottom

SACRAMENTO - While the pace of sales at California new-home communities continued to remain slow in March, year-over-year sales declines are steadily shrinking, adding to mounting

Concerns were down 66 percent. Compared with the same period last year, the median base price of homes sold was down 12 percent.

Non-seasonally adjusted total new-home sales were 12 percent higher than levels seen in February, which is typical as March tends to be one of the strongest months of the year for new home sales. Median base sales prices statewide were just 0.5 percent lower than in February.

Jonathan Dienhart, Director of Published Research for HWMI, notes the trend in year-over-year sales percentages could indicate the bottom is near.

"Last year, new-home sales declined from February to March, bucking typical seasonality trends," Dienhart said. "This year March sales exceeded those of February, which is the expected direction. Additionally, for the third consecutive month the year-over-year decline in new-home sales has shrunk, suggesting the market may be bottoming out."

Dienhart also suggested that while 2008 may be the bottom of the housing market, the path to recovery won't be immediate.

"With challenges in the broader economy, the housing market will likely take longer than expected to start recovery," he said. "A return to more traditional housing demand drivers means we will need job growth and positive economic trends to

Nostalgic Photo Exhibit at VVES June Graduation

Seventy-eight fifth graders at Visitacion Valley Elementary School (VVES) will be promoted to middle school on Thursday, June 12 at 10 a.m.

As usual, the promotion ceremony will be quite formal and upbeat, with all students receiving recognition for individual academic performance.

Two VVES students will earn the Cheryl Hackett Award" for resiliency.

Cash awards this year will be sponsored by the local Lion's Club. Guest speaker will be Hydra Mendoza, School Board member and education advisor to Mayor Newsom.

At this event, parents, guardians, friends and alumni of Little Vis will get to see a small photo exhibit of vintage pictures of the school and its students from the 1940s and 1950s.

The VVES archives also contain documents of the school PTA, its minutes, flyers for its events and other newspaper clippings.

For the third time in four years, VVES students received a state Title I Achieving School Award from the California Department of Education with an API score of 804. A plaque and banner were presented by State Superintendent of Schools Jack O'Connell.



Vintage photos of VES students will be on display during the graduation.

Register Now for Recreation and Parks Summer Activities

San Francisco Recreation and Parks 2008 summer activity registration opens on May 31 at 10 a.m.

Participants can register for their favorite summer activities by first setting up a family account online at www.sfrp.org through Friday, June 13. Neighborhood day camps are also accessible under a new Day Camps section.

Registration and a family account can also be done at any of the neighborhood registration sites during open registration, including: Palega Recreation Center, 500 Felton St. at Holyoke Street; Richmond Recreation Center, 251 18th Ave. at Clement Street; Joe DiMaggio Playground (closed Mondays), 651 Lombard

St. at Mason Street; Eureka Valley; or McLaren Lodge, 501 Collingwood St. at 18th Street; or McLaren Lodge, 501 Stanyan St. Hours vary at locations. Enroll to secure your SOMA/Eugene Friend Rec Center, 270 6th St. at Folsom Street; San Francisco Recreation and Glen Park Recreation Center, 70 Elk St. at Chenery Street; Mission Recreation Center, 2450 Harrison St. at 20th Street; Sunset Recreation Center, 2201 Lawton St. at 29th Avenue; Randall Museum (closed Mondays), 199 Museum

Way; or McLaren Lodge, 501 Stanyan St. Hours vary at locations. Enroll to secure your SOMA/Eugene Friend Rec Center, 270 6th St. at Folsom Street; San Francisco Recreation and Glen Park Recreation Center, 70 Elk St. at Chenery Street; Mission Recreation Center, 2450 Harrison St. at 20th Street; Sunset Recreation Center, 2201 Lawton St. at 29th Avenue; Randall Museum (closed Mondays), 199 Museum

space!

Participants can register for their favorite summer activities by first setting up a family account online at www.sfrp.org through Friday, June 13. Neighborhood day camps are also accessible under a new Day Camps section.

Registration and a family account can also be done at any of the neighborhood registration sites during open registration, including: Palega Recreation Center, 500 Felton St. at Holyoke Street; Richmond Recreation Center, 251 18th Ave. at Clement Street; Joe DiMaggio Playground (closed Mondays), 651 Lombard

Way; or McLaren Lodge, 501 Stanyan St. Hours vary at locations. Enroll to secure your SOMA/Eugene Friend Rec Center, 270 6th St. at Folsom Street; San Francisco Recreation and Glen Park Recreation Center, 70 Elk St. at Chenery Street; Mission Recreation Center, 2450 Harrison St. at 20th Street; Sunset Recreation Center, 2201 Lawton St. at 29th Avenue; Randall Museum (closed Mondays), 199 Museum

space!

Built in 1926 according to the assessor's records, the store was called the Visitacion View Grocery and Meat Market. The phone number was RANDolph 4855, for those of you who remember when telephone exchanges had names. The store owner's name was Pete, and I omit his last name to protect the innocent.

Harry Pierce, one of our oral history contributors, grew up on Tioga Avenue, just one block down the hill from the store, and his family shopped there regularly. As many small store owners did back then, Pete let his customers run up a bill, and the Pierce family would do this, paying the debt every couple of weeks. One evening, Harry's mother asked him to run up to the store for a few carrots for the stew she was cooking. When Harry brought the carrots to the counter, Pete told him, "You can't have these until you pay off your bill. It's over two weeks old." So Harry went home, the stew had no carrots that evening, and the Pierce family paid the bill and never went back there again.

My parents bought their home on Wilde Avenue, just four doors away from the corner store, in 1933. Mom did her bread and milk shopping at Pete's, but also went 'down the Valley' a couple of times a week for meat and other groceries. One day, she reached the top of the hill with her bag of groceries and as she paused to catch her breath (no bus in those days!) Pete came out of the store and yelled across the intersection, "Why are you shopping somewhere else, I have meat and everything you need, you should do your shopping here!" Mom never set foot in that store again, and taught her children not to, either. Guttner's grocery store was a little farther away in the opposite direction, and that's where our daily bread and milk business went.

Clarence Guttner had taken over the business his father started, and he and his wife Edna became good friends of my parents. He was a very early neighborhood activist and served many years as president of the Reis-Paul Tract Improvement Club, the group that brought to the neighborhood the first community service bus, the El Dorado Home School (originally a kindergarten through third grade school) and fought the fight to keep the school district from selling land to the Recreation & Parks Department, the site where Visitacion Valley Middle School now stands. As a grocer, Clarence kept his prices reasonable, had a wonderful penny-candy selection for the kids, and also was a self-taught radio and TV repairman.

Poor Pete, he did keep many customers and his business until he reached retirement age, but he missed out on many friendships with his marketing techniques.

The Visitacion Valley History Project would enjoy hearing from people who remember their local corner grocery store. E-mail Betty.Parshall@flash.net or drop me a line at 386 Wilde Ave., San Francisco, CA 94134.

Crossword Puzzle Solution

CAB	CACO	TOLA
CBA	HSIA	OLEA
AAL	ASA	FETIDA
DANE	LEDA	
ERNST	PRAM	
LUES	LOUT	PLO
MRS	RASSE	LEG
OUS	IDEA	TAUR
ACER	DANCE	
CARE	HART	
GUMARABIC	PEA	
ERIC	BARI	ORB
ODEA	UREA	DAB

EarthTalk

Green Computers

Dear EarthTalk: My old computer finally bit the dust and I am in the market for a replacement. Are there any particularly "green" computers for sale these days? -Brian Smith, Nashua, NH

Thanks in part to pressure from non-profits like Greenpeace International — which has published quarterly versions of its landmark "Guide to Greener Electronics" since 2006 — computer makers now understand that consumers care about the environmental footprints of the products they use.

The latest version of Greenpeace's guide gives high marks to Toshiba, Lenovo, Sony and Dell for increasing the recyclability of their computers and reducing toxic components and so-called "e-waste" (refuse from discarded electronic devices and components). The group also credits Apple, HP and Fujitsu for making strides toward greener products and manufacturing processes, but emphasizes that even such top ranked companies have lots of room for improvement when it comes to the environment.

PC Magazine, the leading computer publication for consumer and business users, recently assessed dozens of personal computers according to environmental standards it developed in-house based on energy efficiency, recyclability and the toxicity of components. The publication also factored in various "green" certification schemes such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's EnergyStar program, the European Union's Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) directive, Taiwan's Greenmark and the computer industry's own Electronic Products Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT).

The top choices for green desktop computers, according to PC, are Apple's Mac Mini, Zonbu's Desktop Mini, HP Compaq's 2710p and dc7800, Lenovo's ThinkCentre a61e, and Dell's OptiPlex 755. As for laptops, the greenest current models include Dell's Latitude D630, the Everex Zorbi, Fujitsu's LifeBook S6510, and Toshiba's Tecra A9-S9013.

Perhaps more important than the green-ness of your new computer is what you do with the old one. Stuffing it into the trash or setting it out for curbside pick-up may be the worst thing you can do with an outdated computer, as heavy metals and other toxins inevitably get free and get into surrounding soils and water. If the machine still works, donate it to a local school that can put it to use, or to Goodwill or the Salvation Army, either of which can re-sell it to help fund their programs. Another option is to donate it to the National Cristina Foundation, which places outdated technology with needy non-profits.

Once you've gotten rid of an old computer and outfitted yourself with a spiffy new green one, you might just want to score a few green accessories. Brooklyn, New York's Verdant Computing, which bills itself as a purveyor of "the greenest computer products on the web," sells remanufactured ink and toner cartridges, laptop cases made from recycled plastic, GreenDisk CDs packaged in recycled plastic jewel cases, solar-powered MP3 accessories, energy-saving printers and even a software program, GreenPrint, which modifies the print programs on your computer to economize on paper and ink/toner use. Verdant also has most products shipped to consumers directly from the manufacturers to save re-shipping.

Dear EarthTalk: Are there any efforts underway to green the air travel industry? It seems to me that it must be one dirty business from a pollution standpoint. -Elias Corey, Seattle, WA

Environmental battles over the siting and expansion of airports are as old as the air travel industry it-

self, but only in recent years have the airlines themselves been under pressure to go green.

And there's no time like the present for the industry to take some action: Air pollution from commercial jets is a growing concern among scientists, as is air travel's role in climate change because of the more acute warming effect of emissions when they are disbursed so much closer to the upper atmosphere.

According to the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, an independent group of scientists that advises the British government, emissions from aircraft will likely be one of the major contributors to global warming by the year 2050. According to USA Today, on a flight from New York to Denver, a commercial jet generates between 840 to 1,660 pounds of carbon dioxide per passenger. That's about what an SUV generates in a month.

Despite still gloomy times for the industry post-9/11, a few are actually responding to the call. Virgin is blazing new trails as part of a \$3 billion investment in energy efficiency. The company is experimenting with biodiesel and ethanol-fuels derived from crops—and has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in ethanol-related businesses. But don't expect to ride on a biofuel-powered jet anytime soon.

Airplane makers are getting in on the act, too. Boeing successfully flew the world's first hydrogen-powered, fuel cell airplane in April

2008. A company spokesperson called the plane—a small one-seater—"full of promises for a greener future." Boeing is working to develop a commercial version, but uncertainties about hydrogen production and distribution put this advancement well into the future, too.

So what can consumers do to fly greener today? Sharon Beaulaurier of GreenLight magazine suggests choosing airlines with newer, more fuel-efficient fleets such as JetBlue, Singapore Airlines or Virgin. She adds that direct flights are better than those with stopovers, as frequent take-offs and landings use more fuel than when the planes are cruising. She also recommends avoiding airlines and airports with bad track records for delays, which leave planes idling and spewing greenhouse gases for hours unnecessarily.

The National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) runs AvoidDelays.com, which helps fliers choose airlines and airports based on on-time departures. Airlines with poor records include American, Atlantic Southeast, ExpressJet, Mesa and United, according to NATCA, which also calls Chicago's O'Hare, New York's LaGuardia, Newark, Philadelphia and San Francisco the worst airports for catching on-time flights.

Meanwhile, the European Union wants to require airlines touching down in Europe to participate in continent-wide carbon reduction programs already in place

The Scare That Just Wasn't There



JAK
Our roving photographer happened upon this scene May 14 around 5 p.m. where a Bomb Squad van was summoned to City Hall. It makes one wonder just how much a false alarm would cost the taxpayers of San Francisco.

Events in June at the Valley Branch Library

Following are events in June at the Visitacion Valley Branch Library, 45 Leland Ave.:

*June 3, 10, 17 and 24, Tuesday: Mother Goose on the Loose with stories songs and rhythms for babies and toddlers at 11:30 a.m.

*June 3, 10 and 17, Tuesday: Preschool Storytime for ages 3-5 at 10:30 a.m.

*June 11, Wednesday: Preschool

Videos for ages 3-5 at 10:30 a.m.

*June 24, Tuesday: Balloons and Magic! Mr. Shap amazes with his sleight of hand and balloon artistry at 10:30 a.m.

*June 27, Friday: School Age Crafts for ages 5-10 at 3 p.m.

*June 30, Monday: Wild Animal Trivia Hunt at 11 a.m. Answer trivia questions correctly for a chance to win a prize.

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Misconceptions About Lifetime Sun Exposure Still Abound

Many people take a laissez-fair attitude about protecting themselves from the sun because they think the damage is already done. Experts have known for quite some time that this is not the case.

"For years, dermatologists believed that the majority of sun exposure was received before the age of 18," said Dr. Perry Robins, President of The Skin Cancer Foundation. "We now know that the damage is typically spread out over the course of a lifetime and that all of the damage matters, yet many people still don't know that. That's why it's so important to be diligent about sun protection at every age, especially as we head into summer."

As reported in the Sun & Skin News, a publication of The Skin Cancer Foundation, a multi-center study led by Dianne Godar, PhD, showed that we get less than 25 percent of our total sun exposure by age 18. Dr. Godar's team carefully analyzed national UVR exposure data over a two-year period as well as the outdoor activity profiles of almost 10,000 Americans and here's how it broke out: ages 1-18, 22.73 percent; ages 19-40, 46.53 percent; ages 41-59, 73.7 percent; ages 60-78, 100 percent. Cumulative average percentage of lifetime sun exposure are based on a 78 year lifespan.

Sun Safety Tips for Active Lifestyles

The Skin Cancer Foundation encourages people to be active and enjoy the outdoors while still protecting themselves from the sun. A little extra effort goes a long way when it comes to sun protection.

Watch the time:

*The sun is strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., so try and do your activities in the early morning or late afternoon. It's cooler during those times anyway which makes overheating less likely.

*Use a sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher whenever you are outdoors.

*Choose a sunscreen with ingredients that block both UVB and

UVA rays.

*Apply liberally and evenly to all exposed skin before you go outside. The average adult in a bathing suit should use approximately one ounce of sunscreen per application. Not using enough will effectively reduce the product's SPF and the protection you get.

*Be sure to cover often-missed spots: lips, ears, around eyes, neck, scalp if hair is thinning, hands, and feet.

*Reapply at least every 2 hours, more often if some of the product may have worn off while swimming, sweating, or towel-drying.

*Choose a product that suits your skin and your activity. Sunscreens are available in lotion, gel, spray, cream, and stick forms. Some are labeled as water resistant, sweat-proof, or especially for sports; as fragrance-free, hypoallergenic, or especially for sensitive skin or children.

Cover-up with clothing:

*Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants. Or, opt for specially made sun-protective clothing that offers a specific UPF (ultraviolet protection factor) number and may be more lightweight and comfortable to wear. The Skin Cancer Foundation considers a UPF of 30 or higher to be very good protection.

*A broad-brimmed hat goes a long way toward preventing skin cancer in often-exposed areas like the neck, ears, scalp, and face. Opt for a 3-4 inch brim that extends all around the hat. Baseball caps and visors shade the face but leave neck, lower face, and ears exposed.

*UV-blocking sunglasses with wraparound or large frames protect your eyelids and the sensitive skin around your eyes, common sites for skin cancer and sun-induced aging. Sunglasses also help reduce the risk of cataracts later in life.

The first organization in the U.S. committed to educating the public and medical professionals about sun safety, The Skin Cancer Foundation.

Saturdays are Special at Randall Museum

The Randall Museum offers drop-in, hands-on art and science workshops every Saturday from 1 to 4 p.m. at 199 Museum Way (off Roosevelt, above the Castro). Workshops are \$3 per child; \$5 for a parent and child combo. All kids under 8 must be with a paying adult. Call 554-9600 for further information.

*June 7: Experience the art of gyotaku, Japanese for fish printing, with rubber fish.

*June 14: Cut, glue, and create your own personal fabric flag in a myriad of textures and colors.

*June 21: Make a large Father's Day

card collage and use our laminator to make it into a placemat your dad can use.

*June 28: Boys and girls alike love to discover the magic of turning recycled paper into beads for necklaces and bracelets.

Other regular Saturday activities include:

*Morning Family Ceramics from 10 to 11:30 a.m. (\$5 per person workshop fee)

*Meet the Animals from 11:15 a.m. to 12 noon.

*Animal Feeding at 12 noon.

*Golden Gate Model Railroad Club Exhibit from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

dation is still the only global organization solely devoted to the prevention, detection and treatment of skin cancer. The mission of the Foundation is to decrease the incidence of skin cancer through public and professional education and research. For more information, visit www.skincancer.org.

Tips on Handling A Real Bad Cold

While science has not yet come up with a cure for the common cold, health care professionals have discovered that certain home remedies can help stop the sniffles or at least let you feel less miserable while you have them. Here are seven steps you may care to take:

1. Chicken soup: Research conducted by the University of Nebraska Medical Center found that its combination of ingredients helps stop the movement of neutrophils—mucus-forming white blood cells that kick in during viral infections such as colds to attack bacteria.

2. Extremities soak: At the first shiver of ill will: Sit on the edge of your bathtub with your legs immersed in piping-hot water and your back swathed in towels. Drink something hot and then sink your arms elbow-deep into the tub. The idea is to sweat out the toxins (but make sure you rehydrate).

3. Vitamin D drops and cod liver oil: Give your immune system an extra boost with an omega-3 fatty acid such as cod liver oil, a superfood high in vitamins D and A.

4. Plain-old vitamin C: Dr. Oz Garcia, a nutritional counselor and life-extension specialist, says, "Ascorbic acid seems to have an anti-inflammatory effect, so the chills are not so dramatic, and the adrenal system seems to respond with better efficiency."

5. Zinc picolinate: Dr. Garcia also recommends cracking open a capsule of zinc picolinate—a mineral bound to the picolinic fatty acid found in mother's milk—onto the back of your throat to reduce inflammation and viral activity.

6. Yogurt: Building a biofilm in your gut is a good way to ensure foundational health. Dr. Garcia says, "If you want to fight colds better, start with a yogurt a day."

7. Keep your nose—and mouth—clean: Dr. Garcia recommends his sick patients buy a new toothbrush and therapeutic toothpaste such as Arm & Hammer's, which more effectively cleans out bacteria with peroxide, fluoride and bicarbonate than does ordinary toothpaste. Also recommended: mouthwash, saline solution and a tongue cleaner. NAPS

*Resource Referrals – case managers will connect businesses to City

City Opens New Small Business Assistance Center

Mayor Newsom on May 12 announced the opening of the Small Business Assistance Center. The center will be lead by Director Brajah Norris and dedicated to serving the needs of small businesses in San Francisco with fewer than 100 employees.

Because of the sometimes tedious steps needed to open or expand a business in San Francisco and the myriad of agencies that must often be contacted when locating here, the Small Business Assistance Center will serve as the City's central point of information and assistance for all city-related small business needs.

"In recent months, the City has asked a lot of our local business community," said Mayor Newsom. "Make no mistake about it — as a former small business owner in San Francisco, I can assure you that the Small Business Assistance Center will prove to be a great asset to any up and coming business."

"With small business accounting for over 85 percent of all San Francisco businesses, the new Small Business Assistance Center is a welcomed resource that directly benefits our small business community," said Director Brajah Norris. "Customer service is a top priority of the Small Business Assistance Center, and we look forward to working with and assisting the small business community."

Located on the first floor of City Hall in Room 110 of the Treasurer/Tax Collector's Office, the center will be staffed by highly trained and dedicated case managers giving assistance in the following five key areas:

*Business Start-up/Expansion—case managers will assist businesses in obtaining necessary licenses and registration, accessing financial resources, and coordinating technical assistance and business advice.

*Permit Assistance – case managers will assist businesses in navigating the permitting process at DBI, Planning, DPH, etc., will troubleshoot permit related issues and help coordinate the permit process among multiple agencies.

*Procurement – case managers will help businesses become certified to do business with the City of San Francisco and provide guidance on how to bid on government contracts.

*Compliance with Government Laws and Regulations – case managers will provide accurate and detailed information regarding complying with local, state and federal business laws, including the Minimum Wage, Paid Sick Leave and Health Access Program ordinances.

*Resource Referrals – case managers will connect businesses to City

services, merchant associations and trade organizations, as well as non-profit and private sector resources.

Services will be available by phone, walk-in, or by appointment. Spanish and Chinese language assistance will also be available. After hours appointments will be available by request. For additional information and assistance, the staff of the Small Business Assistance Center can be contacted directly at (415) 554-6134 or by calling 3-1-1.

The Office of Small Business and the Small Business Assistance Center was established by passage of Proposition I on the November 2007 ballot.

Book Review

Shining a Light On Scientific Failure

It's said that for every brilliant scientific success, there are a dozen failures. A new book tells the story of 12 of those failures in what's been described as an entertaining and thought-provoking manner.

The book, *When Science Goes Wrong* (Plume, \$15), brings together stories of scientific error, on a spectacular scale, from a wide range of disciplines—from forensic science and microbiology to nuclear physics and meteorology.

For example, there is the tale of the appearance of a violent hurricane on land, despite repeated assurances that the hurricane didn't exist.

Another chapter tells the story of a team of scientists who hike into the crater of what they think is a dormant volcano, ignoring signs of an imminent eruption.

The author, Simon LeVay, is a writer and lecturer with a background in neuroscience. While he's best known for his research on the brain and sexuality, he's also co-authored books on such diverse topics as earthquakes and volcanoes, extraterrestrial life and Parkinson's disease. NAPS

Cooking Corner

Toffee-Banana Brownies

If there's anything better than a brownie, it's a toffee-banana brownie. So while a panel of judges determined the \$1 million recipe for the Pillsbury Bake-Off® Contest, people from across America also selected one winner in the 43rd Contest. The \$5,000 America's Favorite Recipe Award went to Gwen Beauchamp of Lancaster, TX, for her Toffee-Banana Brownies. A confirmed chocoholic with a husband who loves brownies, Beauchamp decided to reinvent a favorite brownie recipe for her entry.

(Prep Time: 20 min., Start to Finish: 3 hr. 10 min.)

1 box (19.5 oz) Pillsbury Traditional Fudge Brownie Mix; ½ cup Crisco Pure Vegetable Oil; ¼ cup water; 3 Eggland's Best eggs; 1-1/2 cups toffee bits; 1 cup Fisher Macadamia Nuts, chopped; 2 firm ripe medium bananas, cut into ¼-inch pieces (2 cups); 1/3 cup Smucker's Caramel Ice Cream Topping

1. Heat oven to 350°F. Generously spray 13x9-inch pan with Crisco Original No-Stick Cooking Spray.

2. In medium bowl, stir brownie mix, oil, water and eggs 50 strokes with spoon. Add 1 cup of the toffee bits, the nuts and bananas; stir just until well blended. Pour into pan. Sprinkle remaining ½ cup toffee bits over top.

3. Bake 38 to 48 minutes or until center is set when lightly touched, top is slightly dry and edges just start to pull away from sides of pan. Cool completely, about 2 hours. For brownies, cut into 6 rows by 4 rows. To serve, drizzle each brownie with caramel topping. Cover and refrigerate any remaining brownies.

Makes 24 brownies.
High Altitude Directions (3,500-6,500 ft.). Increase water to 1/3 cup. Add ½ cup all-purpose flour to dry brownie mix.

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 - 網上查詢將會得到即日答覆
 - 會在允許的時間內給你答案
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- 我們電腦的自動化系統將會自動提供最新房地產資料，還有太多(不勝枚舉)

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Visitacion Valley Police Report

Police Cases

*On Apr. 18 at 2 a.m. on the 2200 block of Bayshore Boulevard, two men, a 22 year-old from Oakland and a 21 year-old from Visitacion Valley, entered a convenience store. The San Francisco man took a bottle of wine from the store and left without paying for it. A clerk who tried to stop the thief was pushed aside by the San Francisco man and then assaulted by the Oakland man. The perpetrators fled. After an officer from Bayview Station came upon the scene, the pair was found on Raymond Avenue and arrested them for robbery. Another officer took over the case and booked both men at Ingleside Station. At 5:40 p.m., it was reported that a residential burglary took place on the 200 block of Blythdale Avenue between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Entry was through an open kitchen window with jewelry and clothing taken.

*On Apr. 20 at 2:10 p.m. in Crocker Amazon Park, a 15 year-old Crocker Amazon male reported that a robber held a sharp object to his neck and then took his cell phone. At 4:20 p.m. along the first block of Brookdale Avenue, a 39 year-old Visitacion Valley man was arrested on two felony charges in a domestic violence case.

*On Apr. 23 at 6 p.m., officers responded to a call of a robbery on Burrows Street. They spoke with the victim who told them that she was standing in front of her house on Burrows when an unknown suspect walked up to her and grabbed her purse from her shoulder violently, causing her to fall to the ground and injure her arm. The victim stated the suspect did not say anything to her but fled on foot down the street. Officers searched the area, to no avail. At 11:35 p.m. on the 1600 block of Sunnydale Ave., a 28 year-old Bayview District man told officers from Southern Station that he had been shot in the hand while sitting in a car on the 1600 block of Sunnydale Avenue. The car's driver took the man to the 100 block of Sixth Street where she asked for an ambulance. Ingleside Station officers investigated but could not find any evidence of a shooting on Sunnydale Avenue. The case is being handled by the General Work Detail.

*On Apr. 24 at 8:30 p.m., officers responded to the 500 block of Silliman Street regarding a robbery with a stun gun/taser gun. Officers spoke with the victim who told them that

she was walking down the street when she observed a vehicle stop a few feet in front of her. One suspect got out, placed a stun gun to her head and shot her. The victim felt a buzz all through her head and body which caused her to fall to the ground. Two other suspects got out of the vehicle and all three forcibly robbed her. The suspects got back into the vehicle and left the area. The victim suffered a cut elbow, bruised knee and the effects of the stun gun. Officers searched the area for the car and suspects, to no avail.

*On Apr. 25 at 1:30 p.m., two men were detained after a commercial burglary on Mission Street early in the morning of Apr 22. They were identified and released by Ingleside Station officers. The case was assigned to an inspector of the Burglary Detail. The inspector sought a search warrant for two addresses, one in the Portola District and one in the Mission District. The house in the Mission District was a known haunt of gang members so the warrant was served by SFPD SWAT members. A police sergeant and posse served the warrant in the Portola District. One man, an 18 year-old Portola District resident, was arrested. He admitted to the burglary. Another man, a 19 year-old Mission District resident, is being sought by the Department.

*On Apr. 26 at 5:25 p.m. on the 200 block of Goettingen Street, a Portola District man parked his pick-up truck outside his home and returned to it the next day. A thief had removed the truck's catalytic converter. At 7:30 p.m. on the 1600 block of Sunnydale Avenue, officers investigated a call of a suicidal juvenile and interviewed the girl. She had self sustained injuries and trauma caused by another, too. The officers continued their interview in an ambulance and determined that the girl's 20 year-old brother had assaulted her. Officers located the assailant and arrested him. The Visitacion Valley man was booked at Ingleside Station.

*On Apr. 27 at 12:20 p.m. on the 500 block of Carter Street, A 52 year-old Crocker Amazon woman reported that she had received threats from a man and a woman who claimed that her son owed them money. The son has been incarcerated since 1996.

*On Apr. 28 at 11:30 a.m., a 26 year-old Visitacion Valley woman on Campbell Avenue reported to officers that she had been stalked by an acquaintance, a 35 year-old Visitacion Valley man. The officers investigated her claim, identified the man, and secured a stay away order from a court commissioner. They located the man in his home, served the court order, and arrested the man for stalking and criminal threats. At 9:45 p.m. on the

1900 block of Sunnydale Avenue, officers were on patrol in Visitacion Valley when they heard gunshots. They found a 19 year-old Visitacion Valley man staggering toward them. He had been shot in the chest. An ambulance took the victim to San Francisco General Hospital. Police inspectors took over the case.

*On Apr. 29 at 7:40 a.m. on the 100 block of Blythdale Ave., officers had taken custody of a young lady accused of shoplifting at a grocery store on Mission Street on Apr. 28. During their investigation, they learned that another girl that they had seen leaving the store was involved in the crime, which they had determined to be a commercial burglary. While on patrol in the Visitacion Valley the next day the officers saw the other girl, a 17 year-old. They arrest the juvenile and brought her to a probation officer at the Juvenile Justice Center. At 5:30 p.m. on the 100 block of Hahn Street, officers stopped a 31 year-old Bayview man for reckless driving. The man was arrested for driving with a suspended license. He was also charged with possessing drugs and weapons (switchblade knife).

*On Apr. 30 at 3:30 a.m. on the 1600 block of Sunnydale Ave., a 44 year-old Visitacion Valley man was arrested on felony battery charges in a domestic violence case. At 1:40 pm on the 200 block of Santos Street, an officer investigated a fight and arrested a 22 year-old Visitacion Valley woman for brandishing a knife during an argument.

*On May 1 at 6 a.m. near the corner of Arleta Avenue and Alpha Street, a 43 year-old Visitacion Valley woman had her messenger book bag taken from her as she stood in a bus stop listening to music from a MP3 player. The thief ran to a waiting car, a black four-door compact vehicle, and fled. A witness found the book bag on the street in the 100 block of Tucker Avenue and returned it to the victim. An officer seized some of the recovered items for processing by members of the Crime Scenes Investigation Unit. At 8:45 p.m. on the 1800 block of Sunnydale Avenue, officers were flagged down by a resident who pointed out a man driving away. The resident told the officers that the man had made criminal threats to her. They stopped the 41 year-old Excelsior District man and arrested him on felony charges. At 3:45 p.m. on the 1800 block of Sunnydale Avenue, a 20 year-old Visitacion Valley man told officers that he and his brother were walking on the 1800 block of Sunnydale Avenue when they were approached by four other men. The second group challenged the first pair and one of the four fired two shots at them. The 20 year-old was struck in his leg by a bullet. He was taken to San Francisco General Hospital. A police sergeant of the Gang

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Police Summaries

*Apr. 20: 806 p.m., Silliman and Hamilton Sts., robbery on street with gun.

*Apr. 20: 200 block of Blythdale Ave., malicious mischief, breaking windows.

*Apr. 20: Raymond Ave. and Alpha St., stolen automobile.

*Apr. 21: Felton and Girard Sts., robbery on street, strongarm.

*Apr. 22: 9:20 p.m., 1800 block of Sunnydale Ave., residential burglary occurred between 5 and 9 p.m. Forced entry through kitchen window DVD player taken.

*Apr. 22: 100 block of Lehr St., malicious mischief, vandalism of vehicles.

*Apr. 22: Hester Ave. near Wheeler Ave., stolen truck.

*Apr. 22: First block of Pueblo St., possession of controlled substance for sale.

*Apr. 23: Burrows St. between Goettingen and Brussels Sts., robbery on street, strongarm.

*Apr. 23: Silver Ave. and Girard St., robbery on street, strongarm.

*Apr. 23: Harkness and San Bruno Aves., grand theft purse snatch.

*Apr. 23: 1500 block of Sunnydale Ave., aggravated assault with gun.

*Apr. 23: 1500 block of Sunnydale Ave., burglary of residence, forcible entry.

*Apr. 24: Raymond Ave. and Alpha St., grand theft auto strip.

*Apr. 24: Silliman St. near Holyoke St., robbery, armed with dangerous weapon.

*Apr. 24: Silver Ave. between Goettingen and Somerset Sts., petty theft auto strip.

*Apr. 24: 200 block of Blythdale Ave., malicious mischief, breaking windows, with BB gun.

*Apr. 24: 1700 block of Sunnydale Ave., malicious mischief, vandalism.

*Apr. 25: Brussels St. near Ward St., grand theft from locked auto.

*Apr. 25: San Bruno Ave. between Felton and Silliman Sts., grand theft of property.

*Apr. 25: Goettingen St. near Burrows St., petty theft auto strip.

*Apr. 26: 11:20 p.m., 100 block of Blythdale Ave., residential burglary occurred between 9 a.m. and 10 p.m., forced entry via front window, DVD player and food taken.

*Apr. 26: Girard St. near Dwight St., aggravated assault with knife.

*Apr. 26: Blanken and Peninsula Aves., grand theft from locked auto.

*Apr. 26: 1700 block of Sunnydale Ave., malicious mischief, breaking windows.

*Apr. 26: Hahn St. and Blythdale Ave., grand theft from locked auto.

*Apr. 26: 1500 block of Sunnydale Ave., aggravated assault with deadly weapon.

*Apr. 26: 200 block of Blythdale Ave., burglary, unlawful entry.

*Apr. 26: 1700 block of Sunnydale Ave., aggravated assault with deadly weapon.

*Apr. 26: Dwight and Goettingen Sts., stolen automobile.

*Apr. 26: Bacon and Hamilton Sts., malicious mischief, vandalism of vehicles.

*Apr. 27: Burrows Dr. near University St., robbery on street, strongarm.

*Apr. 27: Silliman and Cambridge Sts., petty theft from locked auto.

*Apr. 28: Harkness and San Bruno Aves., malicious mischief, vandalism of vehicles.

*Apr. 28: Harkness and San Bruno Aves., malicious mischief, graffiti.

*Apr. 28: 1800 block of Sunnydale Ave., aggravated assault with gun.

*Apr. 28: Bowdoin St. between Felton and Silliman Sts., stolen truck.

*Apr. 28: Goettingen and Dwight Sts., burglary of residence, forcible entry.

*Apr. 29: 3:52 p.m., San Bruno Ave. and Mansell St., robberies, no arrest.

*Apr. 28: 8 p.m., 500 block of Bowdoin St., 8 p.m., stolen cars.

*Apr. 29: 1500 block of Sunnydale Ave., possession of marijuana for sales.

*Apr. 29: Mansell and Goettingen Sts., malicious mischief, vandalism.

*Apr. 29: Wayland and Amherst Sts., malicious mischief, vandalism.

*Apr. 29: Burrows St. near Goettingen St., grand theft from locked auto.

*Apr. 29: 1700 block of Sunnydale Ave., possession of cocaine for sales.

*Apr. 30: Hahn St. and Blythdale Ave., petty theft from locked auto.

*Apr. 30: San Bruno Ave. and Burrows St., malicious mischief, vandalism of vehicles.

*Apr. 30: 4:52 p.m., University and Woolsey Sts., robberies, no arrest.

*Apr. 30: 6:50 p.m., 1300 block of Silver Ave., robberies, no arrest.

*May 1: Britton St. near Visitacion Ave., malicious mischief, vandalism of vehicles.

*May 1: Visitacion Ave. near Britton St., burglary of apartment house, forcible entry.

*May 1: Visitacion Ave. and Schwerin St., grand theft from locked auto.

*May 1: Arleta Ave. and Alpha St., robbery on street, strongarm.

*May 1: Sunnydale Ave. and Santos St., malicious mischief, breaking windows.

*May 1: 100 block of Brookdale Ave., aggravated assault with gun.

*May 1: 100 block of Brookdale Ave., malicious mischief, breaking windows.

*May 2: 12 noon, 1500 block of Sunnydale Ave., residential burglary occurred between Apr. 23 and May 1, forced entry via front window, TV and DVD player taken.

*May 2: 12:30 p.m., 1200 block of Sunnydale Ave., commercial burglary (apartment laundry) occurred between May 1 and 2. Laundry's coin boxes forced open and money taken.

*May 2: 8:30 p.m., Sunrise Way, officer arrested a 32 year-old Visitacion Valley man on battery charges in a domestic violence case.

*May 2: Sunrise Way near Sawyer St., battery.

*May 2: Silver Ave. between Goettingen and

Somerset Sts., malicious mischief, vandalism of vehicles.

*May 2: Burrows St. between Brussels and Girard Sts., robbery, armed with gun

*May 2: Delta St. and Teddy Ave., grand theft from locked auto.

*May 2: Delta St. and Teddy Ave., petty theft from locked auto.

*May 2: Wilde Ave. and Goettingen St., stolen and recovered vehicle.

*May 2: Mansell and Goettingen Sts., petty theft from a building.

*May 2: Mansell St. near John F. Shelley Dr., robbery on street with knife.

*May 2: Mansell St. near John F. Shelley Dr., aggravated assault with bodily force.

*May 2: 100 block of Peabody St., grand theft from locked auto.

*May 3: University and Mansell Sts., grand theft from locked auto.

*May 3: Wilde Ave. and Goettingen St., burglary, hot prowl, attempted forcible entry.

*May 3: Bacon and Somerset Sts., stolen automobile.

*May 3: 200 block of Hahn St., grand theft from locked auto.

*May 3: 100 block of Blythdale Ave., petty theft from locked auto.

*May 3: Brussels St. near Dwight St., malicious mischief, vandalism of vehicles.

*May 4: 1:15 a.m., First block of Blythdale Ave., domestic violence case, known suspect wanted for battery and dissuading a witness.

*May 4: 3:30 p.m., First block of Santos St., residential burglary occurred between 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m., forced entry via front window, money, jewelry, and iPod taken.

*May 4: 100 block of Blythdale Ave., battery.

*May 4: Sunnydale Ave. and Santos St., burglary of residence, forcible entry.

*May 5: Velasco Ave. and Santos St., malicious mischief, vandalism of vehicles.

*May 5: 300 block of Tunnel Ave., grand theft from locked auto.

*May 5: First block of Schwenn St., battery.

*May 5: San Bruno Ave. and Felton St., malicious mischief, vandalism of vehicles.

*May 6: 10:55 a.m., San Bruno Ave. and Ordway St., DUI arrest, 46 year-old Bayview District man collided with Muni bus.

*May 6: 6:40 p.m., 1700 block of Sunnydale Ave., residential burglary occurred between 7:20 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., forced entry through window, computer and Playstation taken.

*May 6: Wayland St. near Girard St., malicious mischief, graffiti.

*May 6: Sunnydale Ave. and Santos St., burglary of apartment house, forcible entry.

*May 7: Mansell and Goettingen Sts., malicious mischief, vandalism.

Captain Denis D'Leary of Ingleside Station and Captain John Loftus of Bayview Station contributed to this report.

College Prep High School Moving to the Neighborhood

Metropolitan Arts and Tech High School, or "Metro" for short, is a small, college preparatory, free public charter school that will be sharing a campus with Philip and Sala Burton High School (formerly Woodrow Wilson High School).

Metro has small class sizes, excellent teachers, nationally-recognized teaching methods, and a focus on arts and digital media, which is integrated into all of the subjects.

All of the courses meet the requirements for admission to the University of California system. Metro is one of four Envision Schools, a Bay Area network of high-performing public charter high schools.

Metro Principal Glenn Dennis recently answered questions about the school and its operation.

Can you briefly describe Metropolitan Arts and Tech High School?

Metro Arts and Tech High School is a small college prep public charter high school dedicated to serving City students gain admission to a four-year university.

The school offers a dynamic college prep curriculum and a full spectrum of art and technology courses over the four grade levels (9-12). Class sizes are small, averaging 22 students per classroom. Each semester, students complete and present interdisciplinary projects publicly to parents, community members, and faculty. In addition, students are required to present and defend a digital portfolio of their best work in order to graduate. Metro's graduation requirements meet private and public university admission requirements. This year, approximately 95 percent of the senior class gained admission to a four-year university.

Last year, Metro posted the highest test score gain of any public school in the City (95 points!) and earned a Similar School Ranking of 8 out of 10, second only to Lowell High School. Test scores aside, stu-

dents thrive at Metro because of the project-based learning, dedicated faculty, and the nurturing, positive climate.

Tell us something about you. Where else have you worked and why did you want to be a principal at this particular school?

I have been an educator in public high schools for over 15 years, 12 of those have been as a classroom teacher. My first three years were at Jefferson High School, but my formative years were at Oceana High School. There, I learned the value of project-based learning and the power of having teachers collaborate in shaping the school culture and curriculum in a beneficial way. I became Principal at Metro because it resonated deeply with my personal philosophy about education and possessed the necessary conditions (shared vision, small school, dynamic staff, resources, autonomy) for success. I wanted to work at a school that was committed to raising expectations and achievement levels of urban youth and educators.

Who else is on your leadership team?

I am privileged to work with teacher leaders Abby Benedetto, Natalie Costello, Dan Storz, and Justin Wells. My administrative team includes Todd Williams, Vice-Principal of Student Support and Lexie Cala, Vice-Principal of Operations.

Can you tell us about your teaching staff?

We currently have about six teachers for every 100 students, making our student-teacher ratio about 18:1. Metro recruits teachers from some of the top universities in the United States. We look for teachers that are passionate about their craft, care deeply about students, and like to work as part of a team.

Where will you be located and why are you moving into the neighborhood?

We will be located at 400 Mansell, at the site currently occupied by Leadership High School. Our school is currently located at 2340 Jackson St. Our one year lease expired and we requested that SFUSD move us to a location closer to

where our students live and we are hoping to have a long-term home for our school.

What do you want the Visitacion Valley neighborhood to know about Metro?

Metro is a great choice for students and families who want to attend a performing college prep high school. The school is safe and has a positive environment that supports student learning. Metro has begun forming relationships with local middle schools (eg. Visitacion Valley MS, MLK, KIPP Bayview) and community based organizations in the Portola, Bayview, and Visitacion Valley neighborhoods.

How do you see Metro helping the Visitacion Valley neighborhood? And what kinds of activities will you have your students doing in the greater community?

Metro can help students access a quality education that has the possibility of transforming lives and communities. Students are required to complete a Workplace Learning Experience (WLE) in their junior and senior years where they serve as an intern 1 day a week in the Spring. Many students obtain internships in local community based organizations like schools, libraries, community centers, and other nonprofits.

How will you share the campus with Burton High School? What advantages do you see with this arrangement? How will you be working with the principal of Burton High School?

Metro plans on occupying the first floor of the Burton High School campus. Common areas like the gym, library, auditorium and fields will be shared. We will still be an independent school with our own academic program, classes, and faculty. We do plan on collaborating with the Burton HS faculty in areas like professional development.

How does your school nurture diversity?

We recruit students from all over San Francisco and the Bay Area. We value diversity by making learning relevant and individualized.



A student performance at Metro High School, moving to the Valley this fall.

We nurture a sense of community through our advisory program and weekly community meetings. Issues that affect youth and personal identity are addressed through the curriculum. Our small school size ensures that students who differ by race, class, learning needs, sexual orientation, and personality feel safe and supported.

What kinds of activities will you have your students doing in the greater community?

Who would like your school?

Our school is one of the most ethnically and socio-economically diverse schools in the City. We seek students who will be the first in their families to go to college. Metro also wants students who love learning and who seek a strong sense of community and personalization.

Students who enjoy the arts and project-based learning would also benefit from attending Metro. The school is ideal for students who seek a small school and who might get lost in a large, competitive academic environment.

How do you prepare your students for college and for their lives after college?

All our courses are college prep UC-CSU approved. Our graduation requirements meet the admission requirements for four year private and public universities. We have a full-time college advisor who provides the support and personal attention to help students

navigate the college admission and financial aid systems. Each student receives information about college through the advisory program, especially in the upper grades. We offer SAT prep, college application workshops, financial aid consulting, campus visits, speakers, and fairs. Students also complete two semesters of a Workplace Learning Experience to explore possible careers and the world of work.

What kind of support are you looking for from the businesses, residents, and non-profit organizations in the neighborhood?

We are always looking to place students in quality Workplace Learning Experiences in businesses or non-profit organizations. Community organizations that can provide social, health, or educational services and/or opportunities for students/families. Metro welcomes any financial or volunteer support from the community.

How can we find out more about Metro?

Visit Metro's website: at <http://www.es-metro.org/>. You can also arrange a visit by contacting Ruth Medina, our Office Manager, at 415-550-5920. We are still accepting applications for the next school year for grades 9-10. Upcoming information sessions and questions related to admission can also be found on the website.

Helping Older Drivers to Find the Right Kinds of Cars

A new study from AAA finds that technology can't resolve all the challenges faced by older drivers, but it can help. AAA is teaming up with the University of Florida's National Older Driver Research and Training Center (NODRTC) to identify vehicle features that can assist drivers with visual, physical and mental changes often associated with aging.

"We are committed to helping drivers stay on the road safely as long as possible," said Sean Comey, spokesperson for AAA of Northern California. "Knowing what to look for when choosing a vehicle is an important part of a comprehensive strategy for drivers as they get older."

As a person ages, physiological changes can affect driving ability. Muscle strength, reaction times, range of motion and visual acuity tend to diminish as part of the natural aging process. Also, the increased prevalence of health issues such as arthritis, hip and knee joint pain or osteoporosis can reduce the ability to safely perform the complex task of driving.

People 65 and older are the fastest growing population segment in the United States. By 2020 there will be more than 40 million licensed drivers age 65 and older.

"Many of the changes our bodies experience as we age can affect our ability to safely operate a vehicle," said Dennis P. McCarthy, co-director of the University of Florida's NODRTC. "When looking for ways to help maintain an older person's safety, it's important to address the vehicle they are driving. Today, specific vehicle features can help improve driver comfort and safety." Because everyone ages dif-

ferently, AAA recommends mature drivers look for vehicles with features that address their specific needs and health issues. These may include:

*Active head restraints: This type of restraint moves forward to cushion the head if the car is hit from behind, helping reduce neck injuries.

*Adjustable pedals: With a push of a button, the driver can adjust the accelerator and brake pedals, a feature especially helpful for shorter drivers to reach the pedals while ensuring they are a safe distance (at least 12 inches) from the airbag mounted in the steering-wheel.

*Power-operated seats: These require less strength to adjust. The seats should offer at least a six-way adjustment: forward and backward, up and down, and seatback forward and backward.

*Large knobs and buttons: Audio and climate controls with large features are easier to see, and therefore less distracting.

*Large/wide-angle mirrors: For those who have difficulty turning or twisting to look to the rear when changing lanes or backing up.

*Moderate step-in height: A low-slung sports car may look snazzy, but it requires extra strength and flexibility to get into and out of the vehicle. Likewise, a tall SUV requires extra effort to climb up into a seat.

*Four doors: Though not as sporty, four-door models make entry and exit easier, especially if the car has a rear seat. Two-door cars also have longer, heavier doors, requiring more strength to open and close.

*Keyless entry: Operated by a push-button on the key fob, this feature is good for those with ar-

thritis hands who find it painful to twist a key.

*Keyless ignition: Utilizing a dash-mounted push-button instead of a traditional key, keyless ignition is beneficial to those with stiff or painful fingers.

*Tilt/telescoping steering wheel: The extra adjustments help the driver find a safe distance from the front airbag, as well as a comfortable position that alleviates knee, back, hip, neck or shoulder pain.

*Brake assist: Helps the driver generate enough force during emergency braking to stop the car in time to prevent a collision.

*Low trunk height: Lower access to a trunk, as well as a wide opening, make it easier to load and unload heavy parcels.

*Anti-lock brakes: ABS prevents the wheels from locking during hard braking, helping the driver retain steering control and eliminating the need to pump the brakes, an action that might be challenging for some older drivers.

*Side/side-curtain airbags: Side airbags protect the torso, pelvis and head. Older, frail adults - more prone to death or injury in crashes than younger people - may especially benefit from additional airbags.

*Dual-stage/dual-threshold airbags: The airbag inflation force varies based on driver/passenger weight, distance from airbags and crash severity - important for frail adults who may be injured by airbags that deploy too hard.

*Stability-control: This feature helps prevent loss of control in a turn, especially on slippery roads. It's particularly beneficial to older drivers with slowed reaction

times, because it automatically makes quick corrections to keep the car on course.

More information about the

"Smart Features for Mature Drivers" study can be found online at aaa.com/seniors.

AAA of Northern California offers a wide array of safety programs designed to help older drivers and their families available at aaa.com/seniordrivers.

These include:

*Roadwise Review, an interactive computer program that measures physi-

cal and mental abilities shown to be the strongest predictors of crash risk among older drivers.

*Online Mature Driver Course which helps lower the risk of traffic violations, collision and injury. Completion of the course may qualify for a three-year insurance discount.

*The Older and Wiser Driver brochure with tips on vision, cognition, fitness, and medications.

*How to Help an Older Driver brochure, a help plan for giving up the keys.

Burton Students Explore Impact of War

What does it mean to live through a time of war? As the U.S. marks more than five years of war in Iraq, student journalists at Phillip & Sala Burton High School have explored that vital question by interviewing veterans, conscientious objectors, antiwar activists, and civilian survivors about their experiences of wartime.

The stories the Burton student journalists have collected are remarkable and reflect the ongoing impact of war on our community:

*Freshman William Tatlonghari's grandmother Juanita Tatlonghari told her grandson about her experiences living through the occupation of the Philippines by the Japanese in World War II.

*Senior Ronnisha Johnson interviewed Sean Moynihan, a young man suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder after coming home from the current war in Iraq.

*Junior James Tong talked to his English teacher Robert Emerson about his participation in the movement against the war in Vietnam.

*Freshman Marisela Perez spoke

to Fusako de Angelis, who as a child lived through the bombing of Japan by the United States in World War II.

These are just a few of the stories the Burton student journalists collected. They also spoke with community and family members who survived war in China, Vietnam, and the occupied Palestinian territories, as well as veterans of World War II, the Vietnam War, and the Gulf War. Together, they create an audio mosaic of the ways wars have shaped the lives of people of all ages in the Bay Area.

Highlights from those interviews were featured in an hour-long documentary Stories During Wartime, broadcast on 91.7 KALW-FM public radio on Memorial Day.

Stories During Wartime a collaboration between Burton High School, 91.7 KALW, and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes at UC Berkeley and S.F. State was made possible by the generous support of the California Story Fund of the California Council for the Humanities, Adobe Youth Voices, and the S.F. Education Fund.

Be Shrewd When Passing Along Assets

by Jason Alderman

If you're among the 45 percent of Americans who've already written a will, you may think you've done everything necessary to ensure a smooth transition of your assets to your heirs. Not necessarily.

Some people draft their will but never amend it, even after important life-changing events. Others lose out on favorable tax advantages available when they transfer assets to beneficiaries while still alive.

Here are a few tips for more effectively settling your affairs:

First, calculate your net worth. Draw up a list of all personal property (house, car, jewelry, furniture, etc.) and other financial assets and accounts such as IRAs, 401(k) and pension benefits, bank accounts, investments and stocks. This can be a helpful exercise when deciding how to allocate your assets.

More importantly, periodically reviewing your list might reveal whether you've been spending your savings too rapidly, thereby providing an opportunity to re-jigger your budget and curb harmful spending habits. For help creating a workable budget, check out the tools on Visa Inc.'s free personal financial management site, Practical Money Skills for Life (www.practicalmoneyskills.com/budgeting).

Update legal paperwork periodically. This includes updating your will and all beneficiary designation forms for insurance, retirement plans and other financial accounts whenever your life situation changes – for example, after marriage, divorce, birth of child, or death of spouse or beneficiary.

What could go wrong? Suppose you divorced and remarried; if you never changed beneficiaries, your life insurance benefit could go to your former spouse; or if you forgot to add new children as co-beneficiaries, they could inadvertently be left out of your estate. Consult a financial professional about your particular situation. If you don't know one, www.plannersearch.org is a good place to start your search.

Reap tax savings. There are several ways you can lower your taxes while sharing your assets with others. For example, if you itemize income tax deductions, any contributions made to IRS-qualified, tax-exempt organizations are deductible. So if you were planning to leave cash, stock or property to a charity anyway, you might be able to significantly reduce your tax bite while you're still around to enjoy making a donation. See IRS Publication 526 at www.irs.gov for details.

If you were planning to leave money to others after you die and can afford to now, you're allowed up to \$12,000 a year in gifts per individual before having to pay a gift tax. Note that gifts to pay for tuition or medical expenses and gifts to your spouse, charities and political organizations generally are not taxable. Go to Publication 950 at www.irs.gov for more details.

Finance college. If you plan to help pay for education for your kids, grandchildren or others, there are several tax-advantaged ways to start putting aside money now. For example, when you contribute to a 529 Qualified State Tuition Plan or Coverdell Education Savings Account, interest earned on the accounts is tax-exempt when used for tuition, books and other qualified expenses.

The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission's website provides information on 529 plans (www.sec.gov/investor/pubs/intro529.htm) and the IRS's site explains Coverdell accounts (www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc310.html). Another website, www.savingforcollege.com, discusses these and other education financing methods.

Organ donation. Nearly 100,000 Americans are on organ-donation waiting lists. To be a donor, you must arrange it before you die. For details, go to www.organdonor.gov.

Don't leave important decisions about how your assets will be distributed up to chance; and if you can afford to start sharing now, take advantage of available tax benefits.

Plenty of Bargains at the Third Annual Sidewalk Sale

by Nick Wolff

We couldn't have asked for better weather. After a three-day heat wave where temperatures in the Valley approached triple digits, conditions were ideal Saturday, May 17th for the Third Annual Leland Avenue Sidewalk Sale.

The event, which was attended by an estimated 250 residents, was by all indications a huge success.

From Bayshore Boulevard to Rutland Street, merchants lined Leland Avenue with tables and balloons offering discounts, sales, lunch specials and free offers. Among the free items were books for children and young adults provided by the Children's Book Project of San Francisco. The Visitacion Valley Public Library (45 Leland Ave.) provided free library cards for passersby and JB's The Shop (160A Leland Ave.) offered their famous design work free of charge for anyone who received a haircut during the Sidewalk Sale.

Among the delicious lunch specials to be had were: Hot Dogs and Fruit Jello at the Hernandez Taqueria (98 Leland Ave.), \$2 Fried Rice or Noodles at Happy Family Fast Food (107 Leland Ave.), free soft drinks with any meal purchase at G&L Bakery (198 Leland Ave.) and \$1.00 House Blend Coffee at Joe Leland Coffee Shop (28 Leland Ave.).

Across the street, San On Herbs (33 Leland Ave.) offered a variety of Chinese Herbs for under a dollar. Closer to Bayshore Blvd.: Rainbow Retail (21 Leland Ave.) has specials on toys and purses, Golden 99Cent Zone (5 Leland Ave.) offered a variety of special gift items, and Shun Lee Market (2400 Bayshore Blvd.) had discounted soft drinks and Ramen Noodles.

Not to be outdone was La Loma Produce Market (65 Leland Ave.), which had purses marked 30 percent off to go with their Guatemalan delicacies. Across the street Casa Lopez Produce (58 Leland Ave.) drew large crowds with their fresh fruit, Mango on a Stick and Corn on the Cob. Next door, May May Beauty Salon (60 Leland Ave.) had all services marked 20 percent off.

Hong Kong Hair & Nail Beauty Salon's (199 Leland Ave.) \$2 off haircut-wash-blown dry purchase and \$8 off color-cut-dry treatment sale was a fantastic deal not only on Saturday, May 17 but anytime, when you bring in the Sidewalk Sale flier!

Finally, Bay Wash Laundromat (44 Leland Ave.) had laundry de-



Plenty of bargains in goods, services and food could be found in Visitacion Valley on May 17 during the Third Annual Leland Avenue Sidewalk Sale.

tergent priced down to only \$1 you to all the business owners along with soft drinks and snacks who took their products and services out from their storefront and onto the Leland Avenue sidewalk. For those who missed it, there's always next year. Don't forget to check out www.vvboom.org to keep up with all Leland-Bayshore Corridor activities.

Nick Wolff is program manager of Visitacion Valley Business Opportunities and Outreach to Merchants (VVBOOM).

It was quite a day to shop beautiful downtown Visitacion Valley. Thank

they need," he said.

During the first quarter of 2008, seven of the 10 least-affordable metro areas in the nation were located in California, as were 15 of the bottom 20. While showing a slight up-tick in affordability, Los Angeles County was the nation's least-affordable market, with just 10.5 percent of the homes sold

affordable to a median-income family, up from 6.2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2007.

Rounding out the bottom five metro areas in the nation were New York City (12.5 percent), San Francisco, San Mateo and Marin counties (12.7 percent), Monterey County (13.1 percent) and San Luis Obispo County (13.8 percent).

Nationwide, 53.8 percent of new and existing homes sold in the first quarter were affordable to families earning the national median income. Kokomo, Ind., remained the nation's most-affordable major housing market with an affordability ranking of 95.3 percent, followed closely by Lima, Ohio, with a ranking of 95 percent.

Fundraiser to Preserve Diego Rivera Mural

City College of San Francisco students from the Diego Rivera Art and Social Change Class will hold a fundraiser event to preserve the College's Diego Rivera mural on

Wednesday, June 18 from 6-9 p.m. at the Auditorium of the Women's Building located on 3543 18th St. in the Mission District.

The public is invited to attend

The Sacramento region became California's most affordable market with 49.7 percent affordability, up from 27.2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2007. Butte and 5hasta counties became the second and third most affordable markets in California, with 41.5 percent and 38.1 percent affordability, respectively.

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The fundraiser will include donated works of art which will be auctioned off. Also auctioned will be the new Tasman book entitled *Diego Rivera: the Complete Murals*.

Music and dance performances will include classical guitarist Christopher Kilday as well as the Aztec dance troop Xolo Sacred Dance.

June Class at Garden for the Environment

Garden for the Environment (GFE) will offer the following class in June on Saturday at the half-acre organic demonstration garden in San Francisco on 7th Avenue at Lawton Street. Since its founding in 1990, the garden has operated as a demonstration site for small-scale urban ecological food production, organic gardening, compost education and low water-use landscaping.

To pre-register for classes, call (415) 731-5627 or email info@gardenfortheenvironment.org.

*June 7: Urban Composting from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Give your summer

garden a boost that will guarantee vibrant colors and delectable veggies for the months to follow. Aside from encouraging beneficial soil organisms and conserving a non-renewable resource, composting makes an excellent fertilizer that releases nutrients slowly at a rate which the plants can use them. This fun, hands-on class teaches methods for backyard and worm composting for home and community gardens.

Come learn what you can do to improve your garden and prevent organic waste from ending up in the landfill. Free!

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The public is invited to attend

the building permit is obtained.

"All of these bills continue moving forward in Congress and here in Sacramento, and we urge lawmakers in both capitols to pass these measures quickly to help stabilize the market, improve the economy, and ensure that qualified buyers can obtain the credit

On a statewide basis, the HOI found that a median-income family could have afforded 31

Grapevine Puzzler Sonoma County Towns

K R A P T R E N O H R E K E E M S R E D
 E L N R F V V A L L E Y F O R D P O L L
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 C O T A T I R E N N E J T O H S E Y O B

Aqua Caliente Annapolis Asti Bloomfield Bodega Bodega Bay Boyes Hot Springs Camp Meeker Cazadero

Cloverdale Cotati Duncans Guerneville Healdsburg Jenner Kenwood Lakeville Monte Rio Occidental Penngrove Petaluma Preston Rio Nido

victorious here on Jan. 21.

10. He became King of Spain on Jan. 2.

11. He located the missing Dr. Livingstone near Lake Tanganyika on Nov. 10, saying 'Dr. Livingstone, I presume?'

12. New York political giant was arrested on Oct. 27.

A. Royal Albert Hall
 B. France
 C. Adolphe Thiers
 D. Henry Morton Stanley
 E. Dijon
 F. Boss Tweed
 G. British Columbia
 H. South Africa
 I. Major League Baseball
 J. Great Chicago Fire
 K. Amadeus I
 L. Japan

Answers: 1-G, 2-C, 3-A, 4-J, 5-B,

1871

Match clues to answers.

- It joined the confederation of Canada on July 20.
- He became President of the French Republic on Aug. 31.
- This was opened on Mar. 29 in England by Queen Victoria.
- Bigest among four infernos to break out around Lake Michigan on Oct. 8.
- Country surrendered on Jan. 10 to end the Franco-Prussian War.
- First game ever played on May 4.
- Han system was abolished here on Aug. 29.
- British occupied the Klipdrift here on Oct. 27.
- Giuseppe Garibaldi's troops were

As a Matter of Fact

*Bayonets are believed to have been invented by Basque soldiers in the 17th century, who stuck their knives at the ends of their muskets after running out of gunpowder on the Bayonette Ridge.

*The average American household uses about 110,000 gallons of water a year.

*The standard wine bottle holds about three quarters of a liter.

*The first permanent European settlement of Canada was headed by explorer Samuel de Champlain in Nova Scotia in 1605.

*The killer whale is actually a dolphin.

*Earth's moon is slightly egg-shaped.

*The tallest structure in the U.S. is a TV tower in North Dakota that's 2,063 feet high.

Grapevine Five Years Ago

JUNE 2003

*Community members watched intently as the new clubhouse at Visitacion Valley Playground on Leland Avenue and Cora Street was built. Proudly displaying the name of its neighborhood it serves, the facility was scheduled to open to the public in the summer.

Sump, the Gump



Poor Rix Almanac

by Rix Quinn

Hey, Poor Rix: What is the oldest domesticated animal? – Pet Fancier

Probably the dog, who bonded with humans over 12,000 years ago. The second animal domesticated was the Neanderthal bachelor. But many of them returned to the wild.

Poor Rix: I hate houseflies. How long do they live? – Fly Swatter

Far too long! Actually, the average fly lives only 15 days. But if he works out and stays away from insect sprays and bug-zappers, he might make it to 21.

Dear Poor Rix: What do you know about the best real estate buy ever made? – Land Owner

I suppose it would be Peter Minuet's 1636 purchase of Manhattan for \$24 plus some trinkets and beads. Coincidentally, Poor Rix spent the identical amount on his wife for our anniversary.

Poor Rix: What can you tell me about eye make-up? – Student

Historians say that the earliest eye glitter was made from lustrous, crushed beetle shells. People wore the shiny stuff awhile, but then it began to bug them.

Ancient cultures also prized early face powder, which contained lots of lead. They applied this deadly substance liberally to their faces and necks. This made them look good but feel bad.

Sadly, many died. Maybe that's where we get the term "drop-dead gorgeous."

Dear Poor Rix: What do you think about the current business climate? – Worried

Poor Rix believes that weak economic times are like cold sores. No matter what you do, they will probably eventually get better.

How long does it take a chicken to hatch eggs? – Curious

Along time. But time means nothing to a chicken.

Actually, it takes about 21 days for a chick to come out of its

shell...longer if it's shy.

Dear Poor Rix: Since you claim to be bookish, who invented libraries?

- Librarian

Ancient Mesopotamians deserve the credit. They originally created books by marking on wet clay tablets. When these dried...instant heavy reading!

Then these smart people – with tons of texts – built libraries to house their volumes.

Unfortunately, few ancient books survive. And they don't have many pictures, because it's tough to draw with a chisel.

Poor Rix: I'm about to attend my 20-year high school reunion. Will I enjoy it? – Grad

Poor Rix has never been to a reunion, because he has no class.

But seriously, folks tell me they attend reunions for three reasons: (1) to find out what happened to their bestfriends, (2) to see how much older everyone else looks, and (3) to display a new figure or a new spouse.

Hey, Poor Rix, have you ever been to a fortune-teller? – Futurist

Yep. She looked into her crystal ball and said, "Your future looks cloudy." So I said, "Maybe you need some glass cleaner."

Hey, Poor Rix: School's almost out! How did these institutions begin? – Sophomore

Back in olden days – even before disposable diapers – ancient students learned from private tutors,

like many politicians do now. During rest time, they learned even more by listening to wise men debate philosophical issues.

We do the same today, but we refer to these debates as "call-in talk shows."

Dear Mr. Poor Rix: What's the most beneficial product ever created? – Curious

Poor Rix guesses clothing. If chosen correctly, it keeps us cool in the summer, warm in the winter, proper at work, comfortable at play.

Without clothing, it's hard to get respect, but easy to get arrested.

Poor Rix: Who conceived the idea of business? – Management Student

Commerce is as old as the first person who wanted to trade one thing for another.

One Neanderthal approached a neighbor, asking, "How about me trade you this fine milk cow for your cranky goat?"

The second man misunderstood ... and swapped his brother for a cow. But he also learned the tricks of the trade.

Later, the first print advertisements appeared on ancient parchment. Scientists who unearthed these scrolls found large rectangular chunks of manuscript missing.

Those missing pieces were humankind's earliest "coupons."

Poor Rix – who wrote the new book "Baby Boomers Speak" – welcomes your questions to rixquinn@charter.net

African Americans Before and Behind Camera

A selection of works from two centuries are in a collection on display this month at Museum of the African Diaspora, 685 Mission Street (at Third) beginning on June 19 and continuing until Sept. 28.

Double Exposure: African Americans Before and Behind the Camera highlights African American history as well as the history of photography itself. It will include historical photographs, albums, and cased images from the collection, as well as contemporary art that incorporate historical photographic imagery.

The exhibition will present two predominant subject threads – popular culture and historical images of African Americans and the reality of black life as depicted by African Americans themselves. The photo based artworks in the exhibition comment on slavery, the civil rights conflicts of the twentieth century, and contemporary explorations of family, identity, and history.

The contemporary section of Double Exposure will feature late twentieth-century photography, photo-collage, and mixed media.

This portion of the show demonstrates the range of artistic possibilities in photography and showcases the strong influence of historical and family photographs on contemporary African American art.

Among the techniques represented will be traditional silver prints, Polaroid, and digital prints as well as photographs on linen, wood and felt.

This exhibition was organized by The Amistad Center for Art & Culture, Inc., Hartford, Connecticut. Traveling this exhibition is sponsored by Aetna.

Museum of the African Diaspora is open Wednesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 12 noon to 5 p.m.

Baby Boomers

by Rix Quinn

Question: "When I was a Boomer child, we heard a lot about 'sandlot baseball.' You don't hear that term much anymore. Why?"

Answer: Here's my guess: back in the 50's, 60's, and 70's Boomers might just meet somewhere to play baseball. It might be a schoolyard, a neighbor's house, or just on a vacant, unmowed lot, or "sandlot." Most of us didn't require a fancy field, a backstop, or marked base paths. We just wanted enough room to throw, hit, and catch a baseball.

Also, in sandlot baseball we didn't require a certain number of members on each team. If we had only a few people, one person might hit while the others took places in the infield or outfield.

Are Boomers the most educated generation in history? Possibly.

A U.S. Census Bureau study found that "The proportion of Americans with at least a bachelors' degree grew five-fold from 1950 to 2003, from 3.4 percent to 17.4 percent. The percentage completing high school quadrupled from 1950 to 2003, from 17 percent to 71.5 percent."

Do Baby Boomers express a specific music preference? Well, that's a matter of debate.

Many of us recall the 1950s, when rock-and-roll began. So, we're familiar with those songs, as well as rhythm-and-blues of that era.

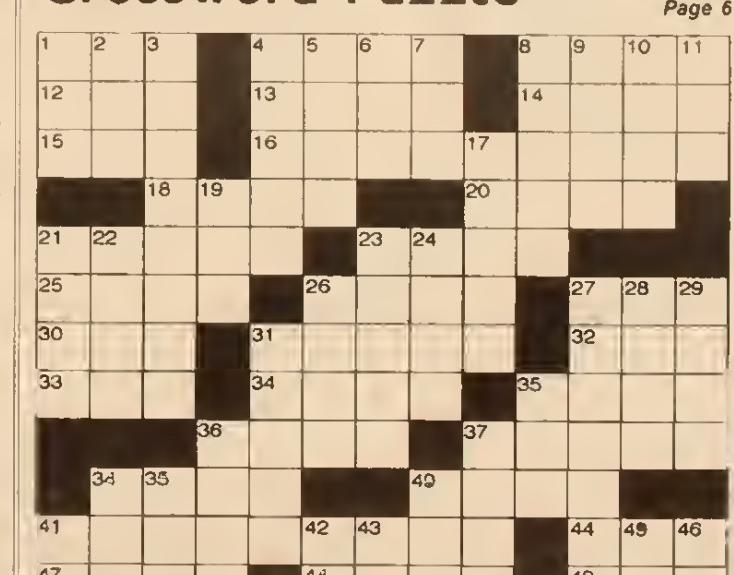
For a large percentage of us, the "British sound" of the mid-to-late 1960s is what we loved in middle and high school. And, we also remember the folk tunes of a number of groups who recorded during that time.

Several Boomers enjoyed the heavy metal sounds of the '60s and '70s, as well as disco music a little later.

So, is there an "official music style" for Baby Boomers? Yes ... many styles.

Crossword Puzzle

Solution on Page 6



ACROSS	1 Vehicle	2 Comportment	3 Bed (pref.)	4 Legal weight of a rupee	5 Certified Public Accountant (abbr.)	6 Chin	7 Dynasty	8 Olive genus	9 Mulberry of India	10 Hing	11 Jutelender	12 Mother of Pollux	13 Herbert Hoover	14 E. 8-E, 9-F, 10-H, 11-D, 12-B, 13-A, 14-C, 15-L, 16-M, 17-N, 18-O, 19-P, 20-Q, 21-R, 22-S, 23-T, 24-U, 25-V, 26-W, 27-X, 28-Y, 29-Z	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46																																												
DOWN	(Abbr.)	13 Ledy's title	31 Civet	32 Limb	33 Adjective forming (suf.)	34 Thought	35 Bull (pref.)	36 Melepe genus	37 Hop	38 Treatment	39 Stag	40 Acacia (2 words)	41 Acacite	42 Edible seed	43 Viking	44 Adriatic seaport	45 Sphere	46 Concert halls	47 Maiden loved by Zeus	48 Wilder than AAAA	49 Overjoy	50 Donkey	51 Fertilizer ingredient	52 Drop	53 Pele	54 Organ.	55 Dromedary	56 Sember deer	57 Millrace	58 Boll (2 words)	59 Weekly colored (pref.)	60 Herd question	61 Sember deer	62 Millrace	63 Boll (2 words)	64 Sember deer	65 Weekly colored (pref.)	66 Herd question	67 Dromedary	68 Pele	69 Organ.	70 Dromedary	71 Sember deer	72 Millrace	73 Boll (2 words)	74 Herd question	75 Dromedary	76 Pele	77 Organ.	78 Dromedary	79 Boll (2 words)	80 Herd question	81 Dromedary	82 Pele	83 Organ.	84 Dromedary	85 Boll (2 words)	86 Herd question	87 Dromedary	88 Pele	89 Organ.	90 Dromedary	91 Boll (2 words)	92 Herd question	93 Dromedary	94 Pele	95 Organ.	96 Dromedary	97 Boll (2 words)	98 Herd question	99 Dromedary	100 Pele	101 Organ.	102 Dromedary	103 Boll (2 words)

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Healthcare Must Start With Small Business

by Todd Stottlemyer

Who among us has not felt the bite of rising healthcare costs in recent years?

That certainly includes small business owners. The cost of healthcare is crushing America's small businesses. It's clear that small businesses have been hit the hardest by this crisis. Of the 46 million Americans who lack health insurance coverage, more than 27 million of those are small business owners, employees and their dependents. In addition, small businesses have experienced 129 percent health insurance premium increases over the last eight years, and pay on average nearly 20 percent more than large businesses for the same healthcare benefits.

This is especially troubling because as small business goes, so goes our economy. Nationwide, nearly 99 percent of all businesses are small businesses, and those businesses create two-thirds of America's net new jobs. If we want them to be able to continue to power our economic success, we must deal with this healthcare crisis now.

For this reason, the National Federation of Independent Business launched Solutions Start Here, the largest and most aggressive campaign in the 65-year history of the organization. This campaign is the small business platform for healthcare reform, designed to help educate America's policymakers about the impact of this crisis on small business. The goal is to actively involve small business in the debate and help our leaders understand that when healthcare is fixed for small business, it's fixed for America.

As the cornerstone of this national campaign, we will involve those who matter the most: the small business people of America. For example, we are touring the country conducting "Fix-it Forums" to listen to small business owners

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and their employees talk about their healthcare concerns. We're visiting towns from El Paso, Texas, to Providence, Rhode Island, from Tallahassee, Florida, to Fresno, California. We'll be taking their stories back to lawmakers in Washington, D.C., to ensure that their voices are heard.

In addition, we're reaching out to each presidential candidate to explain the campaign's goals. We're sharing critical information about the state of the small business healthcare crisis, and challenging the candidates to consider those needs as they develop and refine their healthcare reform plans.

And they will hear from entrepreneurs at the ballot box, too. We recently did a series of polls that clearly show the small business voting bloc, including owners and employees, represents 43 percent of the voting population.

When you compare this number to what pundits have considered to be "influential" voting blocs like Soccer Moms and NASCAR Dads, which account for only 5 percent and 2 percent of the electorate, respectively, you can see the power of small business. And nearly 40 percent of these voters say that healthcare costs are the single most important economic issue they face. The presidential candidates need to know that healthcare is the top priority for this key group.

When it comes to healthcare, this election is not really about which party wins. After all, when you visit the doctor nobody asks for your political affiliation. It's about ensuring that each and every candidate knows that small business demands and deserves a seat at the table when discussing healthcare reform. Right now, our healthcare system is working against small businesses. Our leaders must ensure that it works for them, so that small business can continue to work for America.

Todd Stottlemyer is president and CEO of the National Federation of Independent Business in Washington, D.C.

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